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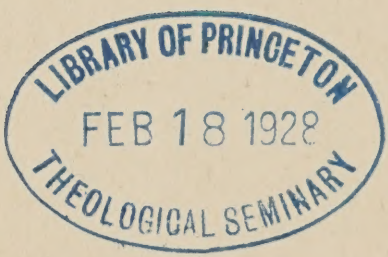

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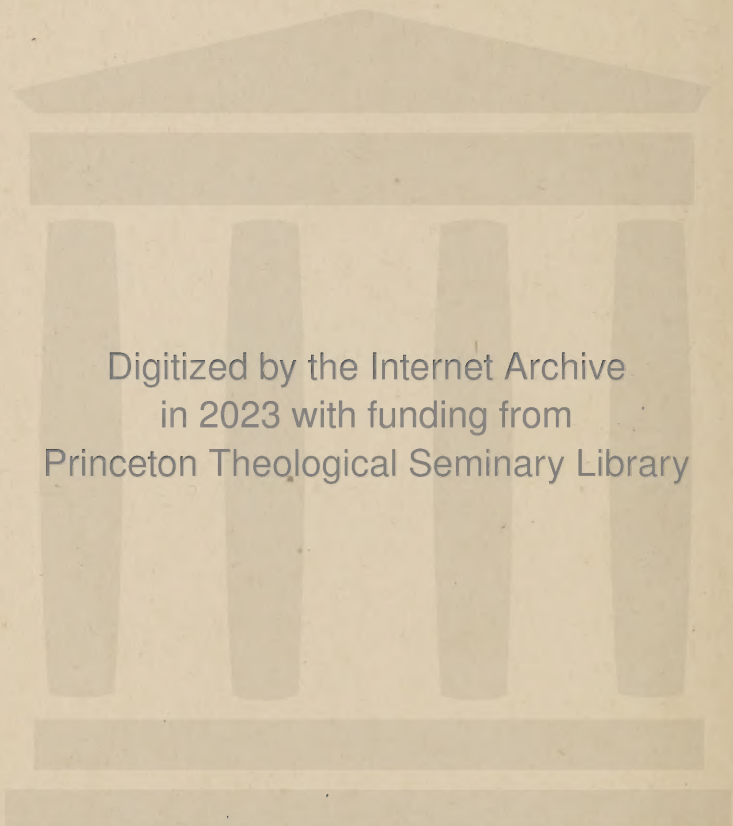
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CHRISTIANITY
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A STUDY OF THE ORIGIN AND GROWTH
OF RELIGION AND THE SUPERNATURALISM
OF CHRISTIANITY

By

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Acts; Etc., Etc.

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Christianity or Religion?

CHAPTER I

Religion

The word religion has a very prominent place in the vocabulary of the civilized nations. It is used in the twentieth century as in no preceding one. But what is religion? It has baffled logical definition. We are still waiting for a satisfying answer, one which covers the many phases and expressions of this term. Hundreds of attempts have been made by pagan thinkers, by almost every school of philosophy, as well as by leading theologians, yet we are wrestling more than ever with this word.

Professor Max Müller in his "Origin and Progress of Religion" says: "With regard to religion, it is no doubt extremely difficult to give a definition. The word rose thousands of years ago; it was retained while what was meant by it went on changing from century to century, and it is now often applied to the very opposite of what it was originally intended to signify."[1] This has been the verdict of philosophers and of all students of comparative religion. Another Oriental scholar, the late Dr. S. H. Kellogg, in his splendid volume "The Genesis and Growth of Religion," a work to which we shall refer frequently, declares that "the definition of such a familiar word might, at first, seem a sufficiently easy matter; but it is evident, from the great number and diversity of definitions which have been given, that practically it has been found very

[1] "Origin and Growth of Religion."

difficult."[2] We could add the similar testimony of many other outstanding thinkers.

The Latin "Religio" in its etymological meaning is also not quite clear. It has been derived from two Latin verbs: relegere and religare. The first means, to gather up again, to consider or ponder; the second, to fasten, to hold back. Cicero derived the word religion from relegere, while many others traced it to religare. Among those who derive it from the second verb we find Servius, Lactantius and Augustinus. They declared that it means, to hold back; that which binds man and puts certain obligations upon him.

It is impossible to give all the leading attempts which have been made to define religion. We cite a few to show what diversity of opinion has been expressed.

Thales belonged to the earliest thinkers of Greece (600 B. C.). He is the ancestor of Darwin and his school, for Thales declared that water was the beginning of all things. With this statement he attacked the current religious belief that the gods had made the world. While Thales has not left a definition of religion, it seems evident that the problems with which philosophy deals were suggested and started by what is called religion. The history of philosophy bears witness to the fact that all philosophers were, and are, forced to deal with this term.

Seneca gave a noble definition by saying religion is "Cognoscere Deum et imitari," to know God and to imitate Him.

We pass by Plato and Aristotle, and other philosophers of antiquity, and their respective schools, and listen to some of the more modern thinkers.

[2]Page 3.

Immanuel Kant tells us: "Religion is morality. We possess religion when we look upon all our moral duties as divine commands."

The father of Pantheism, in a modern sense, Spinoza, the Dutch Jew, gave the following definition: "Religion is the love of God, founded on a knowledge of His divine perfections."

Fichte, the successor and disciple of Kant, took a somewhat different view; he says: "It is conscious morality which, in virtue of that consciousness, is mindful of its origin from God."

Hegel speaks of it as "perfect freedom," a definition which is wholly inadequate. The German Rationalist Strauss expressed himself rather vaguely about religion in his work "The Old and the New Faith." When he speaks of it he follows Schleiermacher's estimate, that religion consists of absolute dependence, it is neither a knowing or a doing, but a determination of the feelings. Yet we find the following paragraph in the work of Strauss: "The world is to us the workshop of the rational and the good. That on which we feel ourselves absolutely dependent is by no means a brute power, before which we must bow in silent resignation. It is order and law, reason and goodness, to which we surrender ourselves with loving confidence. In our inmost nature we feel a kinship between ourselves and that on which we depend. In our dependence we are free, and pride and humility, joy and resignation, are mingled together in our feeling for all that exists." This may be taken as his definition of religion.

Wolfgang von Goethe said, "Religion is a feeling for what is above, around and beneath us."

Dr. Martineau defines religion as "belief in an

ever living God, a divine mind and will ruling the universe, and holding moral relations with mankind." Teichmüller in "Der Christliche Glaube"[3] says, "Religion consists of fear, of aesthetic feelings, such as admiration for the beautiful, and of moral feelings." Professor Reville gave the following as his result of his research: "Religion is the determination of human life by the sentiment of a bond uniting the human mind to that mysterious mind whose domination of the world and of itself it recognizes, and to whom it delights in feeling itself united." Feuerbach, a German Rationalist, makes religion to be a selfish desire. "All religion," he says, "is covetousness, which manifests itself in prayer, sacrifice and faith." But in his "Essence of Christianity," he makes a true statement when he declares, "the sick heart of man is the source of all religion, and of all misery." A similar thought was expressed by Heraclitos (in the sixth century before Christ); he saw religion as one of the diseases from which all humanity suffers, but termed it a sacred disease.

Professor Flint speaks of religion as "man's belief in a Being or beings, mightier than himself, inacessible to his senses, but not indifferent to his sentiments and actions, with the feelings and practices which flow from such beliefs."

Principal Caird gives as the essence of religion the fact that, "the infinite has ceased to be merely a far off vision of spiritual attainment, and ideal of indefinite future perfection, but has become a present reality."[4]

Professor Max Müller, a great Oriental scholar, has left two answers to the question "What is Religion?"

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[3]Page 5.

[4]"Philosophy of Religion," p. 295.

In a lecture on the "Science of Religion," delivered at the Royal Institute in London in 1873 he said: "Religion is a mental faculty which, independent of, nay, in spite of sense and reason, enables man to apprehend the infinite under different names and under varying disguises. Without that faculty, no religion, not even the lowest worship of idols and fetishes, would be possible, and if we but listen attentively, we can hear in all religions a groaning of the spirit, a struggle to conceive the unconceivable, to utter the unutterable, a longing after the Infinite, a love of God."[5]

But later in his Gifford lectures, delivered in 1888, he says: "Religion consists in the perception of the Infinite under such manifestations as are able to influence the moral character of man."[6]

We add one more definition, given by Dr. S. H. Kellogg: "Religion essentially consists in man's apprehension of his relation to an invisible Power or powers, able to influence his destiny, to which he is necessarily subject, together with the feelings, desires, and actions, which this apprehension calls forth."[7]

It is beyond the scope of this volume to take up these different definitions, to scrutinize them closely and to show that they do not express fully the meaning of religion in its different expressions. Each lacks something, and this is true of all other definitions offered by philosophers and theologians. We are therefore still waiting for a complete answer to the question, "What is Religion?"

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[5] "Origin and Growth of Religion," p. 21.
[6] "Natural Religion," p. 188.
[7] "Genesis of Religion," p. 21.

CHAPTER II

The Universality of Religion

While scholars have not yet found a correct and satisfying answer to the question "What is Religion?" religion, beyond controversy, is a universal fact in the entire history of humanity. Religion is confined exclusively to the human race. It is unknown in the world of beings below man, nor is it known in the world of beings above man. Below man is the animal creation. The evolutionist may speak of an animal ancestry of man, but the fact remains that between the most degraded human being, the cannibal, and the highest developed ape there is an unbridgeable gulf. Scientists have trained chimpanzees and other monkeys. They have been taught to assume certain manners. They sit at the table, handling knife and fork correctly, eat almost like human beings, even smoke pipes and cigarettes. But can this ape ever be taught to bow the knee and worship a being above himself? Has the most intelligent chimpanzee ever shown anything like a tendency to fetish worship? Did that chimpanzee ever think of making a god out of one of his ancestors and practicing afterward ancestral worship? In studying ape-life has any scientist ever discovered a chimpanzee or gorilla raising his arms in adoration to the sun? Certainly not; and why not? Because animals have no religious instinct or faculty; they know nothing of religion. The great fact is that the religions and moral phenomena which are present in the entire human race isolate mankind from animals.

Above man is found another class of beings. They are the angels of God. Man is made a little lower

than the angels. Between man and the angels is another fixed gulf. We know much about the angels from the Bible. While they worship and adore, and are God's ministers, the servants He uses, religion as known among men, is unknown among angels.

Religion is confined to the human race. Its beginning however, as far as scientific research is concerned, is shrouded in mystery. The scientist is unable to discover anything about the religious sentiments of primitive man. The prehistoric man has left no records of his religious life. That religion started at a certain point of human existence we shall demonstrate later when we consider the real origin of all religions in the light of the Bible.

The searcher for light as to the earliest conceptions of the unseen at the dawn of human history has no means whatever whereby he can find out the thoughts and feelings of primitive man as to religion. The scientist may assume certain things as to the religion of primitive man, and build upon these different assumptions certain theories, as has been done in the camp of evolutionism, but it is only guess-work.

That man from the very beginning had a religious instinct is a fact which needs no scientific demonstration. M. de Quatrefages in a great work,[1] considers religious sentiment to be the distinctive trait of humanity. But this evolutionist goes too far when he says that, "apart from this there is no essential difference between man and the brute creation." Dr. E. de Pressensé answers this assumption in the following words: "This is an exaggeration; for before man can rise to the religious sentiment, to

[1]Hommes Fossiles, p. 456.

the intuition of a higher life and of spiritual forces, he must possess faculties capable of grasping the general in the particular, that is to say he must possess the power of reasoning on the life of which he is conscious within himself. Now the brute creation never attains to this. With this reservation, we admit that the religious sentiment is the peculiar characteristic of man; it is part of his very being. It is an intuitive and spontaneous development of his nature. He turns instinctively to the Divine as the magnet to the pole . . . If man were not a religious being by nature, he would never become religious."[2]

Religion therefore is universal. The most careful research has yielded this interesting fact.

"There is not a spot upon the earth where the influence of religion is not felt," says Dr. Waitz in his great work.[3] Dr. Tylor in his "Primitive Culture" states: "So far as I can judge from the immense mass of accessible evidence, we have to admit, that the belief in spiritual beings appears among all low races with whom we have attained to thoroughly intimate acquaintance."[4]

Certain explorers of the unknown territories of continents used to report that they had found tribes of men who had absolutely no conception of any religion. They branded them as the "missing link," the fictitious creatures invented to fill that existing gap between the animal world and the world of human beings. But when missionaries followed the explorer, prompted by the constraining love of God, when they began to live among these

[2] "The Ancient World and Christianity," p. 8.
[3] "Anthropologie der Natur Völker," p. 171.
[4] "Primitive Culture," p. 384.

savages, learned their languages, and gained their confidence, the hasty conclusion of the explorer was soon proved incorrect. Years ago one who discovered a number of islands stated that all the inhabitants were so low in the human scale that they had no conception of anything religious. But this man spent exactly a day among them, without being able to converse with them. The Great Dr. Livingstone on the other hand said, "There is no need of beginning to tell the most degraded people of Southern Africa of the existence of God, or a future state, both of these facts being universally admitted by them."

Professor Tiele in his "Outline of Religion" maintains: "The statement that there are nations or tribes which possess no religion rests either on inaccurate observations, or on a confusion of ideas. No tribe or nation has yet been met with destitute of belief in any higher beings, and travelers who asserted their existence have been afterwards refuted by facts. It is legitimate, therefore, to call religion, in its more general sense, an universal phenomenon of humanity." Professor Müller bears a similar testimony. "We may safely say that, in spite of all researches, no human beings have been found anywhere who do not possess something which to them is religion; or, to put it in the most general form, a belief in something beyond what they can see with their eyes."

We cite an interesting case. In 1845 certain Catholic missionaries went to Western Australia to establish Christian missions there. They took great pains to ascertain the religious sentiments of the savages, and for a long time they seem to have been unable to discover even the faintest traces of any-

thing that could be called religious worship. After three years of mission life, the leader of these missionaries declared that the natives did not adore anything in the form of a deity, true or false. Yet he found out that they had a religious conviction, that they believed in an Omnipotent Being, Creator of heaven and earth, whom they call *Motogon*, and whom they imagined as a very tall, powerful and wise man. His mode of creation was by breathing. To create the earth he said, "Earth, come forth!" and he breathed, and the earth was created. And in the same manner he created the sun, the trees, and animals. They also believed in a being whom they called *Cienga*, the author of evil. This latter being is the unchainer of the whirlwind and the storm, and the invisible author of the death of their children, wherefore these natives feared him exceedingly.

Well has it been said that "religion is not a new invention." Some scholars, like the positivist, Dr. Gruppe, declared that religion is a comparatively recent invention. Modern discoveries leading closer and closer to the cradle history of the race, the discoveries made in Assyria and Egypt, prove beyond the shadow of a doubt that religion is not a new invention, but as old as the human race itself. It is, if not as old as the world, at least as old as the world we know. As soon as we know anything of the thoughts and feelings of man, we find him in possession of religion, or rather possessed by religion. The oldest literary documents are everywhere religious. "Our earth," as Herder says, "owes the seeds of all higher culture to religious tradition, whether literary or oral." "Even if we go beyond the age of literature, if we explore

the deepest levels of human thought, we can discover in the crude ore which was made to supply the earliest coins and counters of the human mind, the presence of religious ingredients."[5]

In concluding this chapter we state once more the following important facts. Religion is confined to the human race; man possesses a religious instinct or faculty. Religion is a universal fact, no nation or tribe of people has ever been discovered without a religious belief. Religion is not a new invention, but is as old as the race itself.

[5] "Origin and Growth of Religion," p. 4.

CHAPTER III

The Origin and Development of Religion

We reach now the most important question concerning religion. What is the origin of the religious phenomenon in the entire human race? Homer, that early poet, wrote, "As young birds ope their mouths for food, all men crave for the gods."[1] How is it that human beings have such a craving for the unseen? Where does it come from? And if man has the religious instinct, how did he get it? What is its source? Furthermore there is a most interesting development of the different religions. The history of religion is an almost inexhaustible study. There is Animism, Fetishism, Henothism, Monotheism, all kinds of philosophies, cults and occult systems. How can we account for all these? There is an enormous bibliography in existence, much of it inaccessible to the common reader. On the other hand, books are now published, like a volume which popularizes the false and unscientific theory of the origin of religion, a work which must do an immense amount of harm among young people.[2]

Modernism endorses the infidel theories as to the origin of religion. It is fully committed to a hypothesis which lacks a real scientific support. Modernistic leaders, with a show of learning, speak of research, great scholarship and original, or advanced, thinking. All is aimed to discredit the fact of inspiration concerning the origin of man and to uphold evolution. Hence the origin and growth of religion is explained by them by this naturalistic

[1] "Odys." III:48.
[2] "This Believing World."

theory, that man having a simian parenthood, gradually developed not only physically, but mentally, and originated from some anthropoid ape-ancestry the religious sentiment. But here we halt and ask a question. We have shown in the preceding chapter that the animal world knows nothing of the religious instinct inherent in the human race. We have stated that the religious phenomenon isolates the human race from the animal world. How then is it possible that man coming from the animal could develop this phenomenon, when the same is unknown in the animal creation? Why, furthermore, do chimpanzees, gorillas and other species of simians not develop the religious sentiment, but on the contrary manifest a total inability in this direction? But the whole question demands a closer scrutiny.

The Evolutionist in attempting to explain the origin of religion claims that certain savage races living now on earth, possessing an undeveloped religious sentiment, are a perfect picture of what man was many thousands of years ago, when he started on his upward march from his animal ancestry. But some go still further. They claim that primitive man was very much lower, intellectually and spiritually, than the very lowest of the savages of today. These claims do not rest at all upon scientific knowledge, but are only an assumption. The assumption is that man came into existence gradually by a process of an entirely natural descent from an inferior order of the animal world. This theory is claimed to be well established by scientific research; it is called a scientific truth; but it is far from that. The entire claim, as already stated, is nothing but an assumption, which is not yet proved, and we confidently add, which will *never*

be proved. But why such a positive assertion? Because that which is not truth can never be scientifically demonstrated and proven. The descent of man from anthropoid apes is exposed as an invention by a higher form of knowledge, the knowledge given to man by divine revelation. True scientific research will ultimately demonstrate this and dispose completely of the assumption of man's natural descent.

In writing this we do not forget that men of learning, able scientists, painstaking in their search, persistently assert that the origin of man can be explained by merely natural processes. They fully endorse old pagan theories as to the origin of man, formulated in modern times into a system by Darwin and others. Modernists in pulpits, and others in cap and gown, make much of this fact, that great scientists are on the side of this hypothesis, and then make it appear in their public utterances as if this is the truth which has been conclusively proved. Beginning with our high schools we find this assumption taught as truth to our young people, but the real truth as to the origin of the human race, the truth as written in the Bible, is ridiculed, sneered at and termed unscientific and legendary.

Why not listen to the other side? There is another side. Is it true that all the great scientists of today and of yesterday back up this assumption? Modernistic preachers and professors are not honest in making such a claim. There are great outstanding scientists, geologists, biologists, and archaeologists of world-wide fame who are on the other side, and oppose this assumption. Our space forbids to quote extensively the late Dr. Dawson, Agassiz and other authorities, who were and are anti-evolu-

tionists. The "Journal of the Transactions of the Victoria Institute" of 1890 (Vol. XXVI, pp. 258–260) contains the testimony of the then eminent Professor Virchow of the University of Berlin.[3] He was one of the greatest, one of the most famous scientists who ever lived. As President of the leading European Anthropological Societies he gave a most interesting testimony against the evolutionary invention. We quote him as reported in the Journal. "When we met in Vienna twenty years ago . . . there was a general expectation that man's descent from the ape or some other animal, would be demonstrated. . . . This, Darwinism has not, up to the present time, succeeded in doing. In vain have the links which should bind man with the ape been sought; not a single one is to be recorded. The so-called 'Fore-man,' the *Pro-Anthropos* which should represent the link, has never yet been found. No man of real learning professes that he has seen him. . . . Perhaps some one may have seen him in a dream, but when awake he will never be able to say that he has come across him. Even the hope of his future discovery has fallen far into the background; he is now scarcely spoken of; for we live not in a world of imagination or dreams, but in an actual world, and this has shown itself extremely unyielding. . . . At present we only know that among archaic men none have been found that stood nearer the ape than men of today. . . . It is clear that among all uncivilized tribes there is not a single one that would stand at all nearer to the ape than to us."[4]

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[3]We could fill many pages with more recent anti-evolution testimony by leading scientists.

[4]See "Genesis and Growth of Religion," Kellogg, p. 30-31

This was spoken almost a generation ago. But have there not been new discoveries since then affirming the Darwinian theory? The contrary has taken place. Darwinism is in a coffin. The lid has been put on. Nail after nail has been driven in by the statements of other leading scientists. Some declare that Darwinism is dead once and for all, without any hope of a resurrection.

Alfred Russell Wallace, associate of Darwin and one of the foremost evolutionists, made in his work on "Darwinism" some noteworthy admissions as to the moral, intellectual and spiritual faculties of man. While he believed the Darwinian theory of the origin of species by natural selection, he also declared that the other faculties of man could never have been developed from animals. "These special faculties we have been discussing," he writes, "clearly point to the existence in man of something which he has *not* derived from his animal progenitors—something which we may best refer to as being of a spiritual essence or nature. . . . These faculties could not possibly have been developed by means of the same laws which have determined the progressive development of the organic world in general, and also of man's physical organism." [5] These higher faculties in man he then shows "point clearly to an unseen universe—to a world of spirit to which the world of matter is altogether subordinate." Wallace furnishes a fine evidence against the whole evolutionary system.

When evolutionists declare, in trying to explain the origin of religion, that primitive man "could not have been conscious of his superiority to other animals, nor of his personality, and his spiritual

[5] Darwinism, pp.474-476.

nature; his religion could only have been a kind of indistinct chaotic naturism" (Professor Pfleiderer) they base this verdict upon the evolution assumption and not upon real scientific facts.

Well says Dr. S. H. Kellogg that in spite of certain facts "we still affirm, without hesitation, that modern science has not thereby advanced a single step toward the proof of a *purely naturalistic* evolution; and that therefore, all those theories which assume such a semi-bestial condition as characteristic of the first man, and from this assumption argue as to what was and was not possible to primitive man in religious thought, are essentially unscientific; unscientific in that they assume that to be proved which as yet is not established as fact, but still remains in the region of pure hypothesis." [6]

And now before we proceed in our investigation of the origin of religion we give an illustration of how religion came to be according to this naturalistic conception. We select one of the latest productions, "This Believing World." The author is Rabbi Lewis Browne. Recently the editorial staff of "The Christian Century," a Journal of Religion published in Chicago, with a large nation-wide circulation, recommended the ten most important religious books to the Christian public. Among them we find this book. Let us see then what the editorial staff of "The Christian Century" recommends.

The book begins with a chapter on "How It All Began." The first sentence is this: "In the beginning there was fear; and fear was in the heart of man; and fear controlled man." Everything around primitive man inspired him with fear. "And he, poor gibbering half-ape, nursing his wounds in some

[6] "Genesis and Growth of Religion," p. 41.

draughty cave, could only tremble with fear." He did not know that much of the evil which befell him was accidental. He had the conception, the poor half-ape, that all things in nature bore him malice, for he had not yet discovered that some things were inanimate. All objects, sticks, stones, storms and all else he looked upon as animate. Then he gradually found out that fighting back the enemy-objects was of no avail. If a boulder crushed down on him, it was no use hitting the boulder. Then the idea took hold on him that if he addressed these inanimate objects with words, that this might help. "He thought words might avail; strange syllables uttered in groans, or meaningless shouts accompanied by beating tom-toms. Or he tried wild dances, or luck charms." He felt some spells would work. He believed that the things which haunted him could be appeased. He found that he had to have faith in himself. So faith was born under these conditions, and man began as a half-ape to develop religion. But long before man thought of religion proper, he tried to control the powers of the universe by magic.

Then the half-ape, the cave man, made a step forward. He discovered that besides having a body, he had a spirit. How did he find it out? By a dream. He dreamt of fighting huge beasts during the night at some distant place. He awoke in the morning in the same cave. So he discovered that he was dual, had a body and a spirit. Then he found out what death meant; the other part, the soul, had left the body. He found he had a soul, which was invisible, and then he discovered souls, or spirits, in everything. Thus *Animism* came into

existence; he had reached the animistic stage of religion, when endowing inanimate objects with supernatural powers, and believing that spirits dwell in different objects, which he then worshipped. Like other writers of the same stamp, Mr. Browne declares that millions of savages in the world today are still clinging to this primitive faith which once must have been the faith of all human beings.

After that he developed the knowledge that there are two kinds of spirits, those who are friendly and those who are hostile. After he had tried a long time to overcome the evil spirits he made another discovery, he found that he could bring some of these spirits to be friendly and win them over to his side. A complete revolution in the practice of religion then ensued. He found out that he could exploit these unseen spirits. Then the medicine-man, the *Shaman* came into existence with his rattle to drive away evil spirits. Fetishism was also practiced. The first fetishes, Browne surmises, were probably pebbles, which later became amulets with magical power. The manufacture of fetishes became a sacred profession. Thus the professional holy man, the priest, was originated. Idol worship followed. It was used in the beginning to drive away evil spirits, and to bring the good spirits near. The origin of sacrifice is explained as follows: "The idol was smeared with blood or oil, in the hope that some good spirit might come and lick the redolent bait, and perhaps remain. And then periodically the smearings were renewed in order to hold the good spirit fast. Again and again they were renewed, until in time the practice became a fixed rite. After that, in place of mere smearings of blood

whole carcasses were offered to the good spirit lodging in the idol. And thus sacrifice began."[7] Then the idol needed a shelter and they built a hut for it. "And thus the first church was built!" Finally after centuries and millennia passed, man advanced in his thinking.

The erstwhile ape, half-ape and caveman, became a shepherd and a farmer. He resorted to all kinds of magical practices; coercive rites were invented; prayer also was discovered. "In time of drought he offered sacrifices of food and psalms of praise to the sun and moon and sky." Agriculture developed and with it certain festivals. These festivals were in the beginning extremely lewd; they consisted in sex orgies. Priests were gradually employed in the art of sacrificing at these festivals. Then came priestcraft into its fullest power. Certain sacraments were next originated. Rites at marriage and at the burial of the dead were invented. Finally the great gods came into existence, including the Jehovah, a tribal god of the primitive Hebrews. "Many centuries still had to run their course before any one could imagine a deity who was the one God of the Universe. Men still continue to be polytheists, believing in many gods."

But how did the sense of sin originate? The author gives the following explanation: "Crime, which was really an offense against society, came to be thought of principally as sin against a god. And because often no one could put his finger upon the punishment visited upon the offender by the god, the idea of conscience arose. The god, it came to be believed, punished the wicked in secret ways, sending evil spirits into them to gnaw on their souls

[7]Pages 38-39.

and give them no rest. And when it was seen that many of the wicked seemed quite untroubled by evil consciences, quite unperturbed by secret punishments, then the idea of future suffering was advanced. It was claimed that even though some of the wicked went scot free in this world, in the next they would not be nearly so fortunate." [8] "The actual course of development out of which were evolved these ideas of sin, conscience and post-mortem retribution, was, to be sure, not nearly so simple as made out here. For centuries men fumbled about to lay hold of these ideas, blundering off into the most pathetic errors, and beating their way back only with the horridest pain. But finally the great task was accomplished, and morality, at the cost of being religionized was preserved." [9]

What credulity is needed to accept all this as truth! And such a book is recommended by the editorial staff of a so-called "Christian" Journal of Religion! But we must add what the author of "This Believing World" says after these cock-sure assertions.

"Unhappily that outline ("How It All Began") reads as though given with complete assurance. Despite all the 'perhapses' and 'probablys' scattered throughout the story, it still reads as though the writer knew for certain just what had happened. Actually he knows nothing of the sort. All he knows is what many learned anthropologists, after much painstaking research, have *surmised* to be the truth. Of course they might have *surmised* quite badly. Their underlying theory may be entirely wrong, and religion instead of having been originally created to

[8] Page 53.
[9] Page 53.

elude or conquer fear, may have arisen quite independently of it. Religion may be an altogether primal instinct in the human race, something just as old and fundamentally innate as fear itself. Who knows?" [10] This is at least an honest confession. Who knows? Certainly not the philosopher, nor the atheistic evolutionist. But as we shall find, the origin of religion, as well as the universality of religion, is made known to us by the higher knowledge, given by direct revelation, and is supported by true scientific research in ethnology.

The author of "This Believing World" says that the learned anthropologists "might have surmised badly" and that there is a possibility that "their underlying theory may be entirely wrong." This is exactly what can be demonstrated. It can be demonstrated in a conclusive, scientific way, that is by facts, that they surmised badly and that their underlying theory, not *may be*, but *is* entirely wrong.

We shall now face the question. According to the naturalistic explanation of the origin of religion, so solidly resting on the assumption of a physical evolution, religion started with Fetishism. It is claimed that the fetish worshipers living today in Australia, Africa, and elsewhere, are still in the initial stage of religion; what fetish-worshiping savages are today primitive man was thousands of years ago, when he found his way upward from his animal ancestry.

What is Fetishism? It is the worship of inanimate objects in which supposedly supernatural powers reside. Animism is closely connected with it. It is the belief in spirits also residing in different objects. The word Fetish is derived from the Portu-

[10] Page 59-60.

guese word "feiticos," used for an amulet or a talisman. Portuguese sailors came in touch with savages in the eighteenth century, and seeing them worship certain objects coined this word fetish; this was in 1760. In the same year a small volume appeared in which the fetish cult was described and traced. The author was De Brosses.[11] He wrote two more volumes. The leading assertion De Brosses made is that all nations began their religious worship with Fetishism; this in time developed into Polytheism, and Polytheism was followed by Monotheism, the worship of one God. This is the universal path which has been followed by most scientists who tried to solve the enigma of religion.

But is it scientific to assert that Fetishism is the first religious effort of the human race, and that the present-day Fetishism among savages reflects the worship of primitive man? Is it scientific to assert that animistic worship after having been practiced for many centuries shaped itself into polytheistic worship and this again, after many, many centuries had come and gone was followed by Monotheism, conceived by the expansion of the human mind?

Can all this be scientifically demonstrated? Or is it possible to show in a really scientific way that Monotheism was the original worship of the human race in the beginning, and that in process of time the original worship degenerated into Polytheism, Fetishism and Animism?

One of the leading authorities on the earliest form

[11] "Du culte des Dieux Fétiches, ou parallèle de l'ancienne Religion de l'Egypte avec la Religion actuelle de Nigrite." De Brosses, the correspondent of Voltaire, one of the outstanding characters of the Voltairian period, was born in 1709 and died in 1777. On the instigation of the celebrated Buffon, De Brosses devoted himself to this research.

of religion says: "The most recent investigations indicate that the civilization of the primitive men was of no higher type than that of the present savages; nay, it had not even advanced so far; and in such a civilization no purer religious beliefs, ideas and usages are possible than those which we find among existing communities."

This assertion by Professor Tiele, as well as other anthropologists, claims that primitive men could not have been higher in their religious conception than the lowest savages on earth today. They are forced to maintain this on account of their belief in the physical evolution of man. But this assertion is disproved scientifically by two facts, which show that the savages today in the state of animistic-fetish worship do not reflect the religious condition of primitive men. These two facts establish the truth that the savages of today are degenerated types.

The first fact is the linguistic phenomenon. The language of savage tribes shows a remarkably high state of development, and points clearly to a higher form of intellectual and spiritual life, which must have existed previously among these tribes. Those who maintain that man has been working his way up from his simian ancestry, also believe in a gradual development of human speech. They say that the first sounds coming from the throat and lips of primitive man must have been akin to animal grunts, or like the chattering of monkeys in some jungle. As man climbed upward human speech was correspondingly developed. They also claim that the savage, fetish-worshiping tribes in Africa and elsewhere have but poorly constructed languages. Then they argue from the case of these low-down

savages to that of the primitive men, and infer that primitive men were once in the same state as the savages of today.

One of the greatest philologists, supreme in comparative philology, Prof. Max Müller of Oxford, contradicts the assumption as to the language of savages in a most positive way.

In his "Origin of Religion" he writes, "All the stories of tribes without languages—more like the twitterings of birds than the articulate sounds of human beings—belong to the chapter of ethnological fables; and what is more important still, is that many of the so-called savage languages have been shown to possess a most perfect, in many cases a too perfect, that is to say, too artificial, a grammar, while their dictionaries possess a wealth of names any poet might envy. . . . Every language, even that of the Papuans and Veddas, is such a masterpiece of abstract thought, that it would baffle the ingenuity of many philosophers to produce anything like it. In many cases the grammar of the so-called savage dialects bears evidence to a far higher state of culture possessed by these people in former times." [12]

The fact that these savages have such a highly developed language can be explained only by a superior ancestry. Their ancestors stood on a higher level, while the descendants degenerated and were dragged down to fetish-worship. We add to the testimony of Professor Müller the testimony of several missionaries. Dr. S. H. Kellogg in his work quotes the Rev. Mr. Comber, who is the author of a fine grammar and dictionary of the Congo language. He tells us that in his study of the language

[12] "Origin of Religion."

he met with "new surprises at every point and turn, as the richness, flexibility, exactness, subtlety of idea and nicety of expression, of the language revealed themselves." And that "this wealth in idea and form does not specially characterize Congo, but is possessed by the whole family of Bantu languages to a greater or less extent." He rightly adds, "the widespread possession of these qualities points to their existence in the parent stem, which must have been of a high class." To this is added the testimony of the Rev. J. Leighton Wilson, who labored among the Mpongwe speaking people in Africa. As to the speech of these now fetish-worshiping tribes, he tells us that "this great family of languages, if the Mpongwe dialect may be taken as a specimen, is remarkable for its beauty, elegance, and perfectly philosophical arrangement, as well as for its almost indefinite expansibility." Dr. Kellogg, himself a missionary in India, gives his own experience. "Similar testimony is given as to the Santàli, one of the dialects of the degraded aborigines of India, like the Bantu languages of Africa, only reduced to writing by the missionaries. An experienced laborer among that people has told the writer that, in the conjugation of the verb, for example, the Santàli rivals, if it does not excel, the Greek, in its capacity for discriminating the most delicate and refined distinctions of thought."[13] Well does the same writer draw this logical conclusion: "In the presence of such facts as those which have been mentioned, it is obviously of no force to argue that because many savage races now know of no worship except that of fetishes or various nature-spirits, therefore, that inasmuch as primitive man could not

[13] "Genesis and Growth of Religion," p. 47.

have stood higher than these, he could not have had any correct conception of God. If there is evidence that savages are degenerate families of men, then the primitive man may easily have been in religious capacity their superior."[14] And this evidence, that the savages of today are degenerate families, or tribes, their language has furnished us.

But there is a second fact, which is stronger, and, we believe, conclusive, which demonstrates that Fetishism and Polytheism, as practiced in the world of today, are the degenerate expressions of a purer form of religion. Behind all Fetishism and Polytheism stands Monotheism. Therefore Monotheism, the belief that there is one God, was not reached in the human race by an evolutionary process, after uncountable centuries, but Monotheism was once the religious belief of all nations. This is not guesswork; it is obtained by facts, and therefore scientific. The history of the world bears abundant evidence that religions have been corrupted. The great religions of the world manifest a corruption of their primitive purity. If this can be proved then the whole evolutionary theory of the origin and growth of religion collapses. The men who still teach this theory, and boast of it as scientific discovery, are consequently the most unscientific, for an unproven assumption is not science at all. So let us see.

We shall prove our contention by three facts. The first is the fact that unimpeachable testimony, resting on painstaking and scholarly research, given by the most reliable witnesses, shows clearly that many of the fetish-worshipping savages possess a belief in an invisible, personal God. The second fact is that it has been proved that all the great

[14] "Genesis and Growth of Religion," p. 50.

religions of antiquity, and their offspring, the great religious systems of the modern non-Christian world, the religions of Assyria, Chaldea, Babylonia, Egypt, India, Persia and China, all started with a monotheistic belief, and degenerated later. And the third fact is that the Bible, the most trustworthy historical record in the possession of the human race, shows that there was a primitive religion of Monotheism, and therefore, by its testimony disproves the evolutionary assertion that Fetishism was the religion of primitive men.

I. That fetish and demon worshiping tribes of the very lowest grade have together with their superstitious belief a belief in a higher Being, who is above all fetishes and spirits, has been many times verified by missionaries who lived for years among them, and also by different travelers. There is probably no savage tribe living today, given to the worship of evil spirits and fetishes, that is destitute of a conception of a supreme Spirit who is above everything and who governs everywhere.

In the "Hibbert Lectures" delivered in Westminster Abbey in 1878, on the question, "Is Fetishism a primitive form of Religion?" Professor Max Müller quotes a goodly number of scholarly authorities to answer the question negatively. These authorities are almost one in concluding that the African Negro fetish worshipers believe either in gods, or in a supreme good God, the creator of the world, and that they possess in their dialects particular names for Him. Often no visible worship is paid to the Supreme Being, but to fetishes only. The learned anthropologist, Dr. Waitz, declares that the belief of the Negroes on the Gold Coast in a supreme God is very old. He adds that they in-

voke Him very rarely, that they call Him "their great friend" or "He that made us." Only when in great distress they call out, "We are in the hands of God; He will do what seemeth right to Him." This was, many years ago, confirmed by Basle Missionaries in "Die Basel Missions Magazin." Other fetish worshiping tribes have prayers to the supreme Being for protection against sickness and death.[15]

After many quotations and illustrations Professor Max Müller concluded the lecture as to Fetishism's being a primitive form of religion with the following words: "My position then is simply this: it seems to me that those who believe in a primordial Fetishism have taken that for granted which has to be proved." Then after enumerating their unproved assertions and conclusions he says: "My most serious objection is that those who believe in Fetishism as a primitive and universal form of religion, have often depended on evidence which no scholar, nor historian, would feel justified to accept."[16]

Concerning the tribes of northern and southern New Guinea, Dr. J. Leighton Wilson gives the following testimony: "The belief in one great supreme Being who made and upholds all things is universal. Nor is this idea imperfectly or obscurely developed in their minds. The impression is so deeply engraved upon their mental and moral natures, that any system of atheism strikes them as too absurd, and preposterous to require a denial. All the tribes in the country with which the writer has become acquainted, and they are not a few, have a name for God, and many of them have two or more, sig-

[15]Waitz: Anthropologie II, p. 172.
[16]Hibbert Lectures, 1878, p. 123.

nificant of His character as Maker, Preserver, and Benefactor" . . . "the prevailing notion seems to be that God, after having made the world and filled it with inhabitants, retired to some remote corner of the universe, and has allowed the affairs of the world to come under the control of evil spirits; and hence the only religious worship which is performed is directed to these spirits, the object of which is to court their favor, or ward off their displeasure."

We add but one more testimony, given by Dr. S. H. Kellogg. In speaking of the degraded aboriginal tribe of India, the Santals, actual worshipers of demons, Dr. Kellogg wrote twenty-five years ago: "The Santals, the most numerous and important of these aboriginal tribes, have a tradition, universally accepted by them as true, that in the beginning they were not worshipers of demons as now. They say that very long ago, their first parents were created by the living God; that they first worshiped and served Him; that they were seduced from their allegiance by an evil spirit, *Marang Buru*, who persuaded them to drink an intoxicating liquor, made from the fruit of a certain tree. In consequence, they came under the power of the evil spirit, and hence, from that time until now, have had to worship and serve him, instead of the one God of their fathers. That this remarkable tradition, so wonderfully like the Genesis story, can have been derived from this, through direct or indirect communication with Judaism or Christianity, is apparently, in this case, out of the question; for, from an unknown antiquity, the Santals, in common with other cognate non-Aryan tribes, holding similar traditions,

have lived in the mountains and jungles, far off the lines of travel, commerce and conquest."[17]

It is therefore an established fact that fetish worshiping tribes have, co-existing with their superstitions, a belief in a God who is above all; many of their traditions show that the worship they practice now is a corruption of higher and purer religion.

The great mass of evidence brought to light, fully confirming this fact, we must leave untouched. Even Herbert Spencer in his "Principles of Sociology" concedes the fact that "most savage tribes have had ancestors in higher state."

II. Still greater is the evidence brought to light by reliable and able scholars that the great religions of antiquity, the religions of Egypt, Assyria, Chaldea, Babylonia, India, Persia and China, as well as the present day oriental religions, all started with a Monotheistic conception and degenerated in course of time into Polytheism and even Fetishism. Here we are confronted with an immense amount of trustworthy evidence uncovered by eminent scientists, who have deciphered the great records of the past, the Sumerian, Accadian and other cuneiform inscriptions, as well as the hieroglyphics of Egypt. The work is still going on, showing that the further back we go, the purer becomes the religious sentiment. The evidence which has been unearthed is conclusive, and proves an evolution not upward, starting with Polytheism and merging into Monotheism, but an evolution downward, starting with the purest Monotheism and degenerating into Polytheism. We shall confine ourselves to a very few evidences.

Let us take Egypt first. The excavations there,

[17] "Genesis and Growth of Religion," pp. 60-61.

the opening of the tombs of Pharaohs and exploration of pyramids, have brought to light a very ancient and remarkable civilization, the age of which cannot be fully ascertained. The first dynasty of Egypt has been placed around 3400 B. C. The literature and the monuments of ancient Egypt are very abundant, and all have yielded a large amount of rich and important religious information. While Polytheism is very much in evidence, it has been demonstrated that a chaste and pure Monotheism preceded it all.

We have before us a copy of the Hibbert Lectures, delivered in 1879 by P. Le Page Renouf on the "Religion of Ancient Egypt." This great scholar traced back the worship of the different gods of Egypt, and shows how in the ancient texts in which Ra, Osiris, Amon and all other gods disappear, except as simple names, the Unity of God is asserted in the noblest language of Monotheistic religion.[18]

No scholar is better entitled to be heard on this subject than the late Emanuel de Rouge, whose mature judgment is as follows:[19]

"No one has called in question the fundamental meaning of the principal passages by the help of which we are able to establish what ancient Egypt has taught concerning God, the world and man. The first characteristic is the Unity of God most energetically expressed: God one, sole and only; no others with Him. He is the only Being—living in Truth. Thou art One, and millions of beings proceed from Thee. He has made everything, and He alone has not been made—the simplest, the most precise conception.

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[18]Hibbert Lectures, p. 89.

[19]Annales de la Philosophie Chretienne—Tome XX, p. 327.

"Are those noble doctrines then the result of centuries? Certainly not; for they were in existence more than two thousand years before the Christian era. On the other hand, Polytheism, the sources of which we have pointed out, develops itself and progresses without interruption until the time of the Ptolemies. It is, therefore, more than five thousand years since, in the valley of the Nile, the hymn began to the Unity of God and the immortality of the soul, and we find Egypt in the last stages arrived at the most unbridled Polytheism. The belief in the Unity of the supreme God and in His attributes as Creator and Lawgiver of man, whom He has endowed with an immortal soul—these are the primitive notions, enchased, like the indestructible diamonds, in the midst of the mythological superfetations accumulated in the centuries which have passed over that ancient civilization."

To this conclusive testimony Dr. Renouf adds: "It is incontestably true that the sublimer portions of the Egyptian religion are not the comparatively late result of a development or elimination from the grosser. The sublimer portions are demonstrably ancient; and the last stage of Egyptian religion, that known to the Greek and Latin writers, heathen or Christian, was by far the grossest and most corrupt."[20]

From this and other sources we learn that the order of development of the Egyptian religion was not from the lower to the higher forms, but the reverse. It is the most ancient Egyptian literature which contains the purest faith.

Many pages could be devoted to the evidences of the same nature in connection with the religion

[20]Hibbert Lectures, p. 91.

of the different Shemitic races. The earliest inscriptions dating back to about 3750 B. C., during the reign of Sargon I, confirm the existence of Polytheism. Throughout Assyrian history, covering about thirty centuries, not a speck of evidence is found that these powerful Shemites advanced towards Monotheism; on the contrary, they maintained their Polytheism and became increasingly corrupt. Originally they had the belief in one God. Shemitic races seem to have had a higher conception of the Deity than all other races of antiquity. This is ascertained by the names expressing Deity, as found in the earliest inscriptions, like the old Assyrian *Ilu*, the Hebrew *El*, derived from a root which means "to be strong," while other Shemitic names for God are the names of worship and fear. All these early Shemitic names are of a high moral order and must be traced back to an age when they still formed one great family, when they occupied their great home-center in the valley of the Euphrates. In that remote age they had the highest conception of the "Shem,"[21] the supreme Being, God Almighty; He was the object of fear and worship. Early, after the homeland was left and they were scattered, the process of degradation began; the great Shemitic family drifted into religious corruption of the worst kind. They began to worship "the hosts of heaven," the Sun, Moon and the Stars. Next they conceived the idea of sex-distinction in the different gods they had invented. Then followed the most infamous idolatry combined with the most awful cruelties and unspeakable, unnatural lust. The primitive, pure Shemitic religion became the most horrible nature worship. The most

[21]"Shem" in Hebrew means "Name."

abominable rites were practiced under the name of religion; it became so vile that judgment was the only remedy, as we shall learn later when we turn to the Bible.

We cannot enlarge here on the ancient Babylonian religion and its earliest literature, the so-called "Magical Texts" so successfully deciphered and ably explained by Francois Lenormant. Scholars claim that these earliest records of the race go even beyond 3750 B. C. They reveal Animism, the worship of spirits, with which inanimate objects were supposedly endowed. But behind these magical texts Monotheism also has been traced.

Still more interesting is the study of the religion of the Indo-Aryans, the far away ancestry of the European races, the Latins, the Greeks, the Teutonic-Aryan races, etc. Charles Kingsley's words are worth quoting: "Those simple forefathers of ours looked round upon the earth, and said within themselves, 'Where is the All-father, if All-father there be? Not in this earth; for it will perish. Nor in the sun, moon or stars; for they will perish too. Where is He who abideth forever?' Then they lifted their eyes and saw, as they thought, beyond sun, moon and stars, and all which changes and will change, the clear blue sky, the boundless firmament of heaven. That never changed; that was always the same. The clouds and storms rolled far below it, and all the bustle of this noisy world; but there the sky was still, as bright and calm as ever. The All-father must be there, unchangeable in the unchanging heaven; bright, and pure, and boundless like the heavens; and like the heavens too, silent and far off."

This is not poetic imagination; it is the truth

confirmed by the highest philological and documentary evidence. We quote again from Professor Max Müller's "Hibbert Lectures" of 1878.

"And how did they call that All-father? Five thousand years ago, or it may be earlier, the Aryans, speaking as yet neither Sanskrit, Greek nor Latin, called him *Dyu Patar*, Heaven-father. Four thousand years ago, or it may be earlier, the Aryans traveled southward to the rivers of the Penjab called him *Dyaush-pita*, Heaven-father. Three thousand years ago, or it may be earlier, the Aryans on the shores of the Hellespont called him *Zeus pater*, Heaven-father.

"Two thousand years ago, the Aryans of Italy looked up to that bright heaven above, *hoc sublime candens*, and called him *Ju-piter*, Heaven-father. And a thousand years and more ago the same Heaven-father was invoked in the dark forests of Germany by our own peculiar ancestors, the Teutonic Aryans, and his old name of *Tiu* or *Zio* was then heard, perhaps for the last time."[22]

But the ancient writings, the Vedas, the Vedic hymns, give the conclusive evidence. It is true that even in the earliest Vedic period we find a number of deities mentioned, such as *Indra*, the god of rain; *Vayu*, the god of wind; the *Maruts*, or gods of the storm; *Surya*, the sun-god; *Ushas*, the goddess of the dawn and *Agni*, the god of fire. But they were looked upon as the various manifestations of the one, great, supreme Being.

The phenomena of that early Vedic religion have been described by Professor Max Müller in the following words: "There is a Monotheism that precedes the Polytheism of the Veda; and even in the invo-

[22]Page 209.

cations of their innumerable gods, the remembrance of a God, one and infinite, breaks through the mist of idolatrous phraseology, like the blue sky that is hidden by passing clouds."[23] In that early period of Vedic religion the religious and moral corruptions of Hinduism were unknown. Nothing then was heard of caste, transmigration; there was no idol worship, no authorized infanticide, no widow-burning, no demon worship, no foolish philosophizing. On the other hand in the early Vedic hymns are many sublime passages; many of these passages are echoes of the common traditions concerning creation, the fall of man and the deluge, which belong to the very earliest conceptions of mankind. We quote one.

"In the beginning there was neither aught nor naught,
There was neither sky nor atmosphere above.
What then enshrouded all the teeming universe?
In the receptacle of what was it contained?
Was it enveloped in the gulf profound of water?

"There was neither death nor immortality.
There was then neither day nor night, nor light nor darkness.
Only the *Existing One* breathed calmly self-contained,
Naught else but Him there was, naught else above, beyond;
Then first came darkness, hid in darkness, gloom in gloom,
Next all was water, chaos indiscreet
In which the *One* lay void, shrouded in nothingness,
Then turning inward by self-developed force
Of innery fervor and intense abstraction grew."[24]

Here is an echo of the Bible account of creation. We quote still another passage of the Rig-Veda.

"What God shall we adore with sacrifice?
Him let us praise, the golden child that rose
In the beginning, who was born the lord—
The one sole lord of all that is—who made
The earth, and formed the sky, who giveth life,
Who giveth strength, whose bidding gods revere,
Whose hiding place is immortality,

[23]History of Sanskrit Literature, p. 559.
[24]Rig-Veda; Hymn 129. Sir Monier Williams's translation.

Whose shadow death; who by His might is king
Of all the breathing, sleeping, waking world,
Who governs men, beasts . . . to whom
Both earth and heaven, established by His will,
Look up with trembling mind. . . ."[25]

Such was the original Monotheistic belief of the Indo-Aryans. Polytheism and Fetishism were then unknown. It would take a book of several hundred pages to trace the downward path of this original conception of Deity, as it can be traced through many centuries in India. Today there is much Fetish and Animistic worship in India, even among the Aryan Hindus. It is the result of the same process of evolution through which Egypt, the Shemitic races and others passed, not upward, but downward. Pantheistic philosophies expressed in the *Upanishads* developed into the so-called *Shad-Darshana*, which became a system of agnosticism. Brahmanism developed, producing an overbearing sacerdotal system; the Brahmans also gave the first expression to the teaching of caste, while the pantheistic teaching formulated the doctrine of transmigration. Then Buddhism arose as a protest against Brahmanism. Buddha Gautama (500 B. C.) was an agnostic and his system is agnostic. The legends woven around Buddha sprang up after his death, and were produced through many centuries before and after Christ. The religious history of India is indeed "confusion worse confounded," endless philosophies of pantheism and atheism, and moral degradation, with almost countless idol gods. Let another speak.

"The greatest thinkers of India through the bygone centuries have not been gradually approaching the conception of God as one and personal, but have

[25]Rig-Veda; Hymn 121. Sir Monier Williams's translation.

steadily drifted away from it. In the pre-Vedic period and in the earliest beginning of the Vedic age, the Indo-Aryans seemed to have still retained a conception, somewhat hazy and ill defined, of one Father in heaven; and even when worshiping God under the forms of natural objects and visible phenomena, they recognized Him as One, and as personal power, everywhere manifested behind the visible and material world. But now and for centuries past, the people of India, as a whole, with one consent have identified the Creator with the creature, the most Holy One with the sinner, and therewith continually justify themselves, not only for every form of Polytheism, Fetish worship, Idol worship, or no worship at all, but not the less, by a logic which on their premises is unanswerable, for the commission of grossest impurities and the most flagrant crimes.[26]

Such is the origin and growth of religion everywhere among the early races, a different thing from the puerile inventions of certain infidels, popularized in the book from which we quoted.[27]

Another ancient system is Zoroastrianism, which is still held by the modern Parsees. It was a protest against the nature worship of the Vedas, an attempt among the Zend-speaking people of ancient Persia to call them back to the Monotheistic faith, which they had forsaken. Zoroaster was a strong believer in one God, the creator of heaven and earth. The Zend-Avesta in its most ancient portion bears witness to it in the following words:

"That I shall ask thee, tell me right, O *Ahura*!
Who was in the beginning the father and creator of righteousness?
Who created the path of the sun and the stars?

[26] "Genesis and Growth of Religion," pp. 223, 224.
[27] "This Believing World."

Who causes the moon to increase and wane, but thou?
Who is holding the earth and the skies above it?
Who made the waters and the trees of the field?
Who created the lights, of good effect, and the darkness?
Who created the sleep of good effect and the activity?
Who created the morning, noon and night?
Who has prepared the Bactrian home?
To become acquainted with these things I approach thee, O *Mazda.*
Beneficent Spirit! Creator of all Beings!
That I shall ask thee, tell it me right, O *Ahura.*"

Thus *Ahuramazda* is given as the name of the creator of all things. Yet the original teachings of Zoroaster developed into Dualism, two gods, one good and one evil, and into Poly-demonism, for to the two deities, *Ahuramazda* and *Ahriman*, the evil one, the great serpent, were added a multitude of inferior beings and personifications of them. Zoroastrianism thus tells the same story.

The prominent religions of China are Confucianism and Taoism. But 1800 years before Confucius and Laotze was the "golden age" of the dynasty of Yao and Shun. Confucius compiled the records of the Shu-king, but excluded on account of his own agnosticism nearly all its original references to religion, which in these ancient documents are decidedly Monotheistic. Professor Legge, of Oxford, in his master work on "The Religions of China" says: "Five thousand years ago the Chinese were Monotheists, but even then there was a struggle with nature-worship and divination." The same authority cites a remarkable prayer of an Emperor of the Ming Dynasty (1538 A. D.) which reflects the original, ancient belief in one God. There are many evidences that beneath the degraded religious worship of the Chinese today is still found the conception of one supreme Being as He was worshipped in the days of the Emperor Shun, 2356 B. C. It has

been related by Hudson Taylor, the founder of the China Inland Mission, that the fishermen of the Fukien Province when a storm arises pray to the goddess of the sea, but when that does not avail they throw all the idols aside and pray to the "Great-grandfather in Heaven." "Father" is a great conception to the Chinese mind. "Great-grandfather" is higher still, and means with them the Supreme.

The Temple of Heaven at Peking perpetuates the ancient Monotheistic faith of China, while China of today is filled with Polytheism.

"Within the gates of the southern division of the capital and surrounded by sacred grove, so extensive that the silence of its deep shade is never broken by the noise of the busy world around it, stands the Temple of Heaven. It consists of a single tower, whose tiling of resplendent azure is intended to represent the form and color of the aerial vault. It contains no image; but on a marble altar a bullock is offered once a year as a burnt sacrifice, while the monarch of the empire prostrates himself in adoration of the Spirit of the Universe. This is the high place of Chinese devotion, and the thoughtful visitor feels that he ought to tread its courts with unsandalled feet, for no vulgar idolatry has entered here. This mountain top still stands above the waves of curruption, and on its solitary altar there still rests a faint ray of its primeval faith. The tablet which represents the invisible deity is inscribed with the name *Shangte*, the Supreme Ruler."[28] We do not know how far this worship has been affected by the upheavals in China, for Dr. Martin

[28] "The Chinese," by Dr. Martin, p. 99.

wrote these words many years ago.[29] When the great Chinese scholar Dr. Legge visited this sanctuary he actually put off his shoes, before ascending the great altar, feeling that amidst all the mists and darkness of the national superstition, a trace of the glory of the Infinite Jehovah still lingered.

Wherever we dip in and search among the ancient beliefs of the different nations we discover the same development of the religious phenomenon. Central America and South America, the history of the Aztecs, the former great civilizations in Central America and Peru, all bear the same witness of an ancient Monotheism, which became corrupted. We add but one more witness, the witness given by the aborigines of the North American continent, the great Indian races. As is well known, they all believed in the "Great Spirit" who is above all. The heathen Chippewas pray to *Manedo*, whom other Indians call *Manitou*, the Creator of the world. The history of Moravian Missions among the Indians gives the story of a Mohican chief who asked that a Moravian missionary might be sent to them. This chief said: "Do not send us a man to tell us that there is a God, we all know that; or that we are sinners, we all know that; but send one to tell us about salvation."[30] Many similar evidences are found among the numerous tribes of Indians still

[29]Since writing the above a missionary from China has given us the following information: "The great annual sacrifice in the Temple of Heaven, Peking, came to an end with the overthrow of the Manchus,the Tsing dynasty, and the re-establishment of the Chinese Republic, though Yuan Shih Kai, the first permanent President, later observed it with imperial pomp and great solemnity as part of an ill advised and short-lived effort to establish himself as the first Emperor of the new Chinese dynasty under the title of Hung Hsien."

[30]Dr. A. C. Thompson, "The Moravians."

existent, even among the serpent worshiping Hopis in Arizona, the Navajos and the tribes on the Pacific coast, in Alaska, and the Eskimos in the Arctic circle.

Perhaps the greatest anthropologist is Dr. Ebrard, possessing a scholarship which perhaps no present-day authority can claim. In his monumental work "Apologetics" he goes deep in his investigations, which are found in the second and third volumes of this great work. Then he sums it all up in these words: "We have nowhere been able to discover the least trace of any forward or upward movement from Fetishism to Polytheism, and from that again to a gradually advancing knowledge of the one God; but on the contrary, we have found among all the peoples of the heathen world a most decided tendency to sink from an earlier and relatively purer knowledge of God toward something lower." This is scientific. Evolution, as believed by rationalists, whether in the realm of the physical or the religious, is unscientific.

III. We now turn to the most reliable record of all, the Bible. We need not enlarge here on the trustworthiness of the Holy Scriptures. Nor do we need to devote any space to the glorious vindication of the historical records, how the attacks on the historical and ethnological statements of the Bible have been conclusively answered and silenced by the spade of the archaeologist. All this is well known, but nevertheless some men with their little knowledge, "the dangerous thing," still harp on the former infidel, unproven assertions of destructive critics, that the Bible is historically incorrect.

What we have demonstrated in the foregoing pages, as to the development of religion among the

different nations, is decisively affirmed and confirmed by the Word of God. In the historical records of the Scriptures we discover the same story of a primitive religion and its corruption. In our next chapter, when we shall trace more definitely the record of the Bible as to the origin and development of religion, we shall make some further important and interesting discoveries.

The first chapters of the Bible give us the beginning of all things. The opening of the Book of Genesis has been branded by rationalists, by infidel critics and by the present day Modernists, as legendary and mythical. They point to the fact that the story of Genesis, Chapters i-xi, is also in possession, in some form, of the Chaldeans, the Egyptians, the Iranians, the Indo-Aryans, the Chinese, the Peruvians and other nations, and that the same story can be traced in the mythologies of the Greeks and Romans. The different races of antiquity possess records as to the creation of the world, the golden age of long ago, the fall of man, the deluge and the story of Noah. Then it is claimed that the Hebrews preserved the same legends and embodied them in their national sacred Book, the Old Testament. We take for instance the so-called "Chaldean Genesis." It is claimed that Moses, and others with him, worked over the records inscribed on tablets and cones in cuneiform languages, and put these records into the sacred writings of the Hebrews. But this is once more only an assumption which can never be proved scientifically. Anyone who compares the "Chaldean Genesis," the traditions of the Shemitic families, with the record of the Bible will see at once that the cuneiform account is a perversion, while the Genesis record, written by Moses,

carries with it the conviction of genuineness and reliability. According to the Bible there was a time when the human race was a unit. The human race possessed at that time a primeval faith and religion. The great events of creation, connected with man, the fall of man (so much ridiculed by the evolution-modernists), the cradle-history of the race, the deluge and events connected with it, were handed down by oral tradition from generation to generation. The forefathers of the different races carried with them the knowledge of these historical facts, but in course of time they became perverted and took on different colorings, according to the national peculiarities of these races. Moses in his account gives the true information as to these prehistoric events. How did he obtain it? Did he have in his possession the ancient Chaldean documents? Did his Egyptian training enable him to write as he did? We answer these questions unreservedly with, No! Nor do we concede even the possibility of his having received his information through documents or through other channels. And how is it that in an age when other nations also began to write down their cosmogonies that Moses wrote in such a chaste way, without any mythological embellishment, which makes the records of those nations so ridiculous? How is it that he wrote truths as to creation which science has never been able to disprove, but on the contrary, which science had to acknowledge as being the correct order? There is only one answer possible. He received his information by direct revelation from our Creator-God. This is perfectly logical. The creature of the dust is unable to find out God by searching; nor can any man by searching find a solution of the

origin of the Universe and of man. A personal God, who has given His creature, man, the capacity to know Him and to worship Him, and to be in His fellowship, demands a personal revelation of Himself, as well as those things which cannot be known by searching. This revelation as to the beginning, creation, man and his early history, has been given through the divinely inspired pen of Moses. From the record of Genesis we learn that the religion of the antediluvian world was Monotheism, the worship of the true God. The corruption which set in at the close of that age must have been produced by a false worship, by following evil spirits (Genesis vi).

After the deluge the sons of Noah and their offspring kept together. For a time they continued in the worship of God. Then something happened. Before we reach this in the record of the first book of the Bible we find an ethnological table, in which the generations of the sons of Noah are traced after the flood (Genesis x). It is absolutely correct, as shown by such scholars as George Ebers, and others. In the chapter which follows we read: "And the whole earth was of one language, and of one speech" (Genesis xi:1). They kept together in the territory, which was probably the scene of the beginning of the race, the land of Shinar. Then fear took hold on them that they might be scattered. They thought of making themselves a name; instead of worshiping the Name. They undertook to build a city and a tower that should reach into heaven. Then their common language was confused and they were scattered abroad upon the face of all the earth. They began their wanderings, and though they carried with them the knowledge of

God, and the traditional knowledge of the events of the past, they soon gave up the Monotheistic belief and became idolators, Animistic and Fetish worshipers. The descendants of Shem, the Shemites, became likewise corrupted.

In the possession of the writer is an interesting, original Babylonian "cone," covered with a cuneiform inscription. It was found in the debris of the once flourishing Ur in Chaldea. The late Professor Dr. Clay of Yale University furnished a translation which assures us that the cone dates back to the regin of King *Libit-Ishtar*, and that it was used as a votive object in an idol temple which stood in Ur. It was made at the time when Abraham lived there with his family. The cone confirms the Biblical statement that Terah, the Shemite, the father of Abraham, was a worshiper of idols. "Your fathers dwelt on the other side of the flood in old time, even Terah, the father of Abraham, and the father of Nahor; and they served other gods" (Joshua xxiv:2). Undoubtedly Abraham, who became through grace the friend of God, was originally a worshiper of idols.

The Lord of heaven appeared unto him. He called him to separation, and as he was obedient God revealed Himself to him. The descendants of Abraham received the revelation of the Creator-God, Jehovah-Elohim. It is sufficient to say, without enlarging, or tracing the entire history of the chosen people, that there was manifested among them a constant tendency to leave the Monotheistic belief and to turn to the corrupt and corrupting worship of other nations. Though Jacob knew Jehovah, yet idols, images and fetishes were found in his household (Genesis xxxv:2-4). When the

sons of Jacob were enslaved in Egypt, the great mass of them forgot God and fell in with the Egyptian idol worship. Then Jehovah did signs and wonders in Egypt. They witnessed both the faithfulness and the power of the God of their fathers. He redeemed them out of Egypt by the blood of the Passover Lamb, and at the Red Sea He redeemed them by power. Soon after they turned under the leadership of Aaron to the Egyptian animal-worship. "They made a calf in Horeb, and worshiped the molten image. Thus they changed their glory into the similitude of an ox that eateth grass. They forgot God their Saviour, who had done great things in Egypt" (Psalm cvi:19-21). "They joined themselves also unto Baal-peor, and ate the sacrifices of the dead" (Psalm cvi:28).

The Canaanitish nations, once Monotheists like the other primitive nations, had turned to such horrible nature-worship, and had plunged into an indescribable corruption, so that their utter extermination was the only merciful remedy left. God committed the execution of his righteous sentence to His people Israel. He also warned constantly against the horribly vile practices of these nations. But what took place? "They did not destroy the nations concerning whom the Lord commanded them, but were mingled among heathen, and learned their works. And they served their idols, which were a snare unto them. Yea, they sacrificed their sons and their daughters to devils, and shed innocent blood, the blood of their sons and of their daughters, whom they sacrificed unto the idols of Canaan, and the land was polluted with blood. Thus were they defiled with their own works, and went awhoring with their own inventions" (Psalm

cvi:34-39). In every period this tendency to leave the worship of Jehovah and to turn to idols is only too manifest. The great and illustrious son of David, Solomon, with a wisdom which has become proverbial, with honor and glory heaped upon him by the kindness of God, after he had the most striking manifestations of Jehovah, turned away from Him. "For it came to pass when Solomon was old, that his wives turned away his heart after other gods, and his heart was not perfect with the Lord his God, as was the heart of David his father. For Solomon went after Ashtoreth the goddess of the Zidonians, and after Milcom, the abomination of the Ammonites. . . . Then did Solomon build an high place for Chemosh, the abomination of Moab, in the hill that is before Jerusalem, and for Molech, the abomination of the Ammonites. And likewise did he for all his strange wives, which burnt incense and sacrificed unto their gods" (I Kings xi:8).

The house of Israel went from bad to worse in the most abominable idol worship, in spite of the fiery warnings of the prophets of Jehovah, till finally they were carried away into Assyria. The house of Judah followed in the same path of degradation, as it is written: "Moreover, all of the chief priests and the people transgressed very much after all the abominations of the heathen, and polluted the house of the Lord which He had hallowed in Jerusalem. And the Lord God of their fathers sent to them by His messengers, rising up betimes, and sending; because He had compassion on His people, and on His dwelling place. But they mocked the messengers of God, and despised His words, and misused His prophets, until the wrath of the Lord

rose against His people, till there was no remedy" (2 Chronicles xxxvi:14-16). They were carried away into Babylon.

The Bible fully sustains our argument. The same evolutionary development downward from Monotheism, a primitive faith, to idol worship with all its corruption, which we have so fully demonstrated as existent among the different races or tribes, is fully confirmed by the sad history of Israel's apostasy.

We must not overlook the fact that the Bible gives other hints as to a primitive religion. As we have seen, research has revealed such a primitive faith, held for a time by the different nations. We point first of all to the ancient Book of Job. The book does not contain an allegory but actual history. The exact time when Job lived cannot be fully ascertained. But there can be no question that he lived in the patriarchal age, perhaps contemporary with Abraham, or even before Abraham. Internal evidences bring this to light. Job and his three friends, and also Elihu, who appeared last, had a remarkable knowledge of God, as well as the character of God. The glory of God as witnessed to in creation is a prominent feature in this book. Here too we find the two age-long questions, "How shall a man be just with God?" and "If a man die, shall he live again?" Here also is found the longing for a daysman, an umpire. "Neither is there any daysman betwixt us, that might lay his hand on both of us" (Job ix:33). The whole book demonstrates a primitive religion.

We mention Melchizedek (Genesis xiv:17-20). Some have imagined that this person, so mysteriously introduced, without an account of his ances-

try, the beginning or the end of his days (Hebrews vii:1-3) must have been a theophany, perhaps the oft-appearing "Angel of Jehovah." But this is not so. He was a real person. He was king in Salem (Ur-Salem, undoubtedly Jerusalem, originally the Canaanitish capital). He also was a priest, the "priest of the most high God" (El Elvon). He represented the still lingering primitive faith in the midst of an ever-increasing Polytheism, with its accompanying abominations.

In the history of Abraham, Abimelech, king of the Philistines, is mentioned. One cannot read the record without receiving the impression that the Philistines at that time still retained a vestige of the ancient primitive belief in the God of Heaven, for God came to Abimelech in a dream. God commanded Abraham to pray for Abimelech; a friendly covenant was also made by Abimelech with Abraham, which Abimelech renewed with Isaac.

Centuries later we see the Philistines given over completely to Polytheism; the Monotheistic faith was abondoned. The worship of Dagon, the fish-god, had supplanted it. Beelzebub was the god of Ekron.

Mesopotamia possessed the knowledge of God, but idolatry was rapidly replacing the primitive faith. While Abraham had left the old homeland, being called away from the scene of the encroaching false worship, his brother Nahor remained there. When Abraham's servant visited Mesopotamia we find that Laban and Bethuel still acknowledged Jehovah (Genesis xxiv:50). Years later when Jacob visited Haran and met Laban, Nahor's son, we get evidence as to how the faith of their fathers was being given up. Rachel, the daughter of Laban,

Jacob's wife, had stolen the gods which Laban worshiped. Laban said, "Wherefore hast thou stolen my gods?" (Genesis xxxi:30). The Septuagint translates the word "Gods" with "Idols."

As we learned, ancient Egypt possessed in the beginning a pure monotheistic faith. A confirmation of this we find in the story of Joseph. When Joseph had interpreted the dreams of Pharaoh, the king and his counselors acknowledged the interpretation as from God. "And Pharaoh said to his servants, Can we find such a one as this, a man in whom the Spirit of God is?" (Genesis xli:38)

Before we conclude this chapter and examine the testimony of the Bible as to religion, its beginning, development and universality, we shall call attention to the fact that the same corruption, which we have traced in the foregoing pages, is in evidence in the new dispensation, the Christian era.

The greatest revelation of God is not written in His works, in the physical creation, the heavens and the earth, but it is given in the Lord Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God. His self-witness is conclusive; "I and my Father are one" (John x:30); and "He that seeth Me hath seen the Father" (John xiv:9). He came to make visible the invisible God. In Him God came down to man, and through Him man is brought back to God.

Supernaturalism connected with His Person, His words, His works, the reader will find unfolded in the second part of this volume. Here we point to the fact that He announced on earth a new form of worship. It was to be a spiritual worship, a Monotheistic worship, a worship of God as Father. "The hour cometh, and now is, when the true worshipers shall worship the Father in spirit and in

truth, for the Father seeketh such to worship Him. God is a Spirit, and they that worship Him must worship Him in spirit and in truth" (John vi:23, 24). Such a worship and worshiping body came into existence by the Holy Spirit. The body is the Church of Jesus Christ, composed of believing Jews and Gentiles.

For a time, in the beginning of the Church, we behold this pure worship. It was founded on nothing but the divinely communicated doctrines of the Apostles, resting upon the words, and more so, upon the great redemption work of the Lord Jesus Christ. It did not last very long. Soon corruption set in, a corruption which was foreseen by the Apostles. They wrote their warnings, at a time when the Church knew nothing of this corruption.

A priestly class arose in the Church and by its assumption, an assumption nowhere warranted by the teachings of Christ and the doctrines of the Apostles, led to the corruption of Christianity. The priest-caste culminated in the *Pontifex Maximus*, a term and a position aped after paganism. It would be impossible to follow here the history of the corruption of Christianity and the true worship. One thing after another was introduced, the worship of saints, the supposed relics, bones of men and women, the worship of images, Mariolatry, the use of amulets and other foolish and idolatrous inventions. The church sank lower and lower; Christianity became heathenized, for pagan worship had been revived and was fully established in Christendom. Within scarcely six centuries from the establishment of the Church a vile corruption had taken place. This worship of statues, bones, pictures, wooden and metallic images, was nothing else but

a revival of Polytheism and Fetishism, as well as ancient Animism. Thus it appeared to Mohammed. This "Christian idolatry" was to him the same thing as the Arabian Koreish. The armies of the false prophet swept over the whole idolatrous system and wrought an unspeakable destruction, wiping out everything. It was the judgment of God.

The same corruption is still here, for Romanism holds on tenaciously to shrines, relics of the saints, worship of saints, angels, pictures, images and numerous other things. Thus in the midst of Christendom we find an illustration of the same process of corruption which we have traced in the ancient nations and in the existing non-Christian religions. Romanism, while it is a religion, is not Christianity.

The tendency in Protestantism to return to the same beggarly elements of the world, the corrupt "religious" world, is only too evident to need further comment. As the end of this age approaches pagan worship on Christian ground will be revived, and finally culminate in the worst form of false worship, the worship of the Man of Sin, the son of perdition (2 Thessalonians ii). The Patmos vision of the beloved disciple furnishes the prophetic evidence. The Babylon of long ago, the starting point of Polytheism, looms up again, as we learn from the capstone of the Bible, the Book of Revelation (Chapter xvii).[31]

We must not leave unmentioned another line of corruption of true Christianity, a corruption which

[31]It has been shown that the Romish idolatrous worship going on under the name of "Christian" is patterned after the old Babylonish worship. That is why in Revelation Papal Rome is called, "Babylon the great, the mother of harlots." Dr. Hislop in his book, "The Two Babylons" gives the evidence. Our readers will find our own exposition of Revelation helpful.

is going on today. The inspired pen of the Apostle Paul wrote almost 1900 years ago what should take place in Christendom. The Spirit of God predicted through him a departure from the faith revealed in a supernatural way. The predictions are given concerning a time when professing Christians would leave the faith and give heed to seducing spirits and doctrines of demons (I Timothy iv:1).

Again we read of a time when sound doctrine would no longer be endured, when professing Christians would turn their ears away from the truth, and would accept fables instead of it (2 Timothy iv:3). In the same Epistle we find the prediction that those who have a form of godliness (an outward Christian profession) would deny the power of godliness and live as the heathen live. (Compare Romans i:29-32: the heathen moral characteristics, with 2 Timothy iii:1-5). In these predictions and others given by Peter, John and Jude, we have the same downward evolution, instead of a process of upward development.

The whole history of Christendom bears witness to the correctness of these divinely given anticipations, and never before as much as in the twentieth century. Those who leave the supernatural faith of Christianity, the faith in supernaturalism, follow the same path which was followed by ancient nations thousands of years ago. Spiritism, for instance, flourishes in the midst of Christendom. The Spiritism of today is the same as was practiced in Egypt, in Babylon, in Assyria and Persia thousands of years ago. It is the same with Theosophy. Many thousands of people in Great Britain, in France, Germany, and also here in the United States are adherents of this system. What is it? A transplanting

of the corrupt philosophies of Hinduism and esoteric Buddhism upon western, so-called "Christian" ground. Christian Science belongs to the same class. As has often been said, it is neither Christian nor is it science. It is unchristian, anti-christian, and unscientific. As a metaphysical system, it is a revival of what was in the world thousands of years ago.

And the Modernist! He comes with the plea for a new religion. Deliberately he turns his back on the great doctrines of the Christian faith. Deliberately he denies the cardinal articles of the supernaturally revealed truth of God. In doing this he is set adrift. He begins his wandering; it leads him further and further away. Jude speaks of Modernists as "wandering stars" (Jude, verse 13). The wandering stars in the universe are bodies, or parts of bodies, which detached themselves from a solar system. They left the center. They became eccentric. And thus they are no longer controlled by certain laws; the circles they may bring them further and further away and they rush into greater darkness, till a catastrophe ends their wanderings. Such is Modernism. It has left Christ, the supernatural Christ, the Christ of God. It has detached itself. It wanders about aimlessly. As we have pointed out before, Modernism rests upon a denial of supernatural revelation and upon the hypothesis of evolution. Physically and spiritually man is developing upward. We have demonstrated all this as being assumptive, and therefore unscientific. To this we add the fact that Modernism gives itself the lie, for Modernism is but an evidence of the downward tendency of the race.

What we have shown to be the truth in the

religious phenomenon collectively is also confirmed by the individual experience. True believers often sing:

> "Prone to wander, Lord, I feel it;
> Prone to leave the God I love."

Only a hypocrite will deny the truth of these lines. There is in every heart possessing the knowledge of God this tendency to leave the truth, to forsake it. The experience is so prominent that it does not need further elucidation. Where does this tendency in the entire human race come from? How is it that man in the beginning had a monotheistic belief, knew God, and then turned away and became a worshiper of idols? How can it be explained, this path of corruption, this downward evolution? Let us see.

CHAPTER IV

The True Origin and Growth of Religion in the Light of the Bible

The Bible! The Book of all books! We often hear it said in our days that other nations have their Bibles also. The sacred writings of the East are meant, the Rig-Veda, the Zend-Avesta, the Upanishads, the Laws of Manu, the Koran and others. We possess these volumes and have spent much time in studying them. The longer we read the more we feel as though walking in a dismal swamp. One looks for a ray of light, for something to satisfy the craving of the human soul, but as one reads on all becomes darker. And there is much that is unmoral and immoral. Yea, some portions of these "sacred writings" are so filthy, so horribly obscene, that their translation has never been attempted.

We put down the volume and reach out for the one Book. As soon as we open it and begin to read, even in its historical portion, we feel that we have left the dismal swamp with its filth and mire and have been transported into a fragrant meadow, with its refreshing green bathed in bright sunshine.

The Bible is the inerrant Word of God. Its sixty-six books are not a collection of religious writings, advancing certain theories, but they constitute one body, breathing with life and power. From the first verse in Genesis to the last verse in Revelation there is a wonderful continuity of thought, without any clash of opinion; all is a harmonious whole. This fact necessitates one great author, one who guided the thoughts of each writer and who instructed them to write as they did. This guiding

and supervising author is the Spirit of God. "All Scripture is given by inspiration of God, and is profitable for doctrine, for reproof, for instruction in righteousness" (2 Timothy iii:16). "For prophecy came not in old time by the will of man, but holy men of God spake as they were moved by the Holy Spirit" (2 Peter i:21).

We approach this wonderful Book to find out if it contains a solution of the religious phenomenon as it is in the world of human beings. Logically, a perfect solution must be found in this Book, since the Spirit of God is the author of it. If the Bible also should leave us at sea, if no satisfactory light is thrown on this question as to the origin, growth and universality of religion, the Holy Scriptures would have to be rejected as insufficient, because of their failure to account for this greatest of all phenomena.

But we are not disappointed in our expectations, for the Bible gives such a solution, in fact the only reasonable one. As we trace it we shall find that the research of scientists, anthropologists, archaeologists, and those who study more especially the different religions, have confirmed, though in an imperfect way, the revealed Biblical account of religion.

Sublime is the opening verse of the Bible. No other book begins in such a way. "In the beginning God, created the heavens and the earth." There is no statement, or argument, to prove the existence of a supreme Being. Why not? Because it is not needed. The Creator knows that He does not need to demonstrate His existence to a creature He has created and destined to be in fellowship with Himself. The first verse of the Bible is itself a wonderful answer to all the erroneous beliefs in

the world as to God, creation and matter. Atheism, Materialism, Pantheism, Polytheism, Fetishism, Animism, and Evolutionism, are all answered by the sentence which in the Hebrew has only seven words. In this one sentence, the truth is revealed as to the origin of all things in heaven and on earth. No science will ever be able to write such a sentence, and if it ever should, it would mean only a reverential acknowledgment of what was written thouands of years ago. God, eternal, self-existing, called into existence the heavens and the earth. God in His eternity transcends human reason, for this is finite; He is infinite. Matter came into existence by Himself; matter is therefore not eternal.

Revelation is silent as to the time when God created the heavens and the earth, nor will science ever find out how old the physical earth and the surrounding heavens are. Guesses vary from ten million to one thousand million years. The different periods which the science of geology teaches are accounted for in the second verse of the Bible. Here we find the original creation plunged into chaos. It had undergone a cataclysmic change, a fact which science has discovered. There was darkness and all was covered by water.

Then, in a not very remote age, but recently, the earth was brought up out of the chaotic condition and vegetation, animal life and finally man appeared on it. The Bible reveals the dignity of the human race. Its positive teaching is that man was created and not evolved. The highest authority, the Lord Jesus Christ, has affirmed this fact, that man was brought forth by a creative act of God. (Mark x:6). Man was created in the image and likeness of God. In the Gospel of Luke the first

man, Adam, is called the son of God (Luke iii:28). Paul, when on Mars Hill in Athens, quoted from Greek poets to demonstrate this truth. "For in Him we live, and move, and have our being; as certain also of your own poets have said, For we are also His offspring" (Acts xvii:28). As to the antiquity of the human race we can rest assured that the remote ages given by numerous scientists are nothing but guesses. While certain scientists in examining skulls and bones of pre-historic men gave verdicts as to their age varying from ten to fifty thousand years and more, other equally able and painstaking scientists upset their estimates completely and proved that the skulls and bones were but a few thousand years old.

The creation of man was a definite act of God. With man's creation a special class of beings came into existence, distinct and separated from the animal world. This creative act is described in the following words: "And the Lord God formed man out of the dust of the ground, and breathed into his nostrils, the breath of life; and man became a living soul" (Genesis ii:7). Man was created a physical and a spiritual being. Besides having a wonderfully made body, he also possessed soul and spirit. God alone has immortality, that is, essential immortality. But when God breathed into the nostrils of man He communicated to him a spiritual nature, and with it endless being. The breath of God cannot be anything less. As such a being man was created for fellowship with his Creator, to enjoy Him and live for His glory. That man was not an unintelligent, chattering ape, or half-ape, as evolutionists teach, is likewise proved by the Genesis record.

God brought before Adam, the first man, the dif-

ferent animals, to see what he would call them. He named them all. "And Adam gave names to all cattle, and to the fowl of the air, and to every beast of the field" (Genesis ii:20). He possessed intelligent speech. He had discernment as to the character of the creation below him, the different animals. He was not at a loss as to the proper word descriptive of the different beasts. And the names he pronounced were acknowledged as correct. "And whatsoever Adam called every living creature, that was the name thereof" (Genesis ii:19).

God placed him in a special environment of beauty, the garden of Eden. He gave him dominion over the earth. He held communion with the first man and with the woman taken out of his side. Such was the exalted position of the progenitor of the human race.

Man created in innocency was subjected to a very simple test. He was warned of the consequences of disobedience. A mysterious being appeared on the scene, and by his subtlety this being led man to the act of disobedience which accomplished his fall.

We realize that, while we tersely restate these familiar Bible-truths, there are many difficulties and problems connected with the history of the creation of man, with the origin and originator of evil, with the fall of man, and other parts of the Mosaic account. To enter into all these is not the object of this volume.

The Biblical record then gives us two facts as to the first man. The first fact is that man was created in the image and likeness of God. He did not ascend out of a mysterious and undefinable slime-pit. On account of the nature which man

received in creation he possesses a faculty and capacity for religion. This is the primary solution of the problem of religion, the reason why everywhere in the human family is found the religious phenomenon. It arises out of the fact that man was created as a spiritual being. The revelation which the Bible gives as to the origin and nature of man is fully attested by the fact that man wherever he may be found craves for the fellowship of the supreme Being in whose existence he is forced to believe. Therefore the whole race feels that there is an invisible, a supernatural power on which man is dependent, with which he must reckon. As we have seen, the recognition of this Power is universal.

The second fact is, that man was disobedient and transgressed. That which the Bible calls "sin" came into human existence. The spiritual nature of man was changed into a nature of sin. As the history of the race progressed this evil nature worked out into its horrible fruit, and man's body, soul and spirit became corrupted. He was dragged down. Any one can sneer at the third chapter of Genesis and reject its message as unhistorical, yet the fact of sin and its awful fruitage remains, and is only too evident. The greatest teacher said: "Out of the heart proceed evil thoughts, murders, adulteries, fornications, thefts, false witnesses, blasphemies" (Matthew xv:19). Throughout the Bible we have a great demonstration of the sin fact. The horrible outworking of the corrupt nature of man, acquired by disobedience, is faithfully described. The depths of human depravity are sounded and its filth is brought to the surface. God Himself in giving His estimate of man declares: "There is none righteous, no not one. There is none that understandeth,

there is none that seeketh after God. They are all gone out of the way, they are together become unprofitable; there is none that doeth good, no, not one" (Romans iii:10-12). No civilization, no legislation, and no reformation can change the acquired sinful nature of man. The unnatural vices, as well as gross licentiousness of ancient nations, the Assyrians, Chaldeans, Phoenicians, Romans and Greeks, are still being practiced, and that in the very midst of a boasting "Christian civilization."

With the loss of man's innocency the conscience faculty came into prominence. Man knows the difference between good and evil, he is capable of recognizing moral law and religious obligation. But more than the conscience faculty, the consciousness of sin and its accompanying guilt became the strongest factor in the development of religion. Here is where the naturalist is at sea. He tries to account for the universal sin-consciousness, but fails miserably, like the Rabbi who wrote the book to which we referred in the preceding chapter. Dr. S. H. Kellogg says: "It is one of the most remarkable characteristics of modern naturalistic theories of the development of religion, that, for the most part, they ignore this universal consciousness of sin, and quietly assume that religious development has progressed under normal conditions, and thus also, must have been marked, on the whole, as a progressive elevation and continuous improvement of man's religious ideas. But this common assumption is in contradiction to most manifest and indisputable facts. Conscience in all ages has steadily witnessed that man's moral relation to the Power with whom in religion he has to do, is not what it should be. All religions agree in taking it for

granted that in this relation there is something abnormal, which, somehow, through religion, needs, if possible, to be set right. In a word they testify always and everywhere, that man feels himself to be a sinner, and, because of this, out of harmony with the Power which rules the universe. About this fact there is no room for debate. One may, if he will, regard this universal feeling as a groundless superstition. But such an individual opinion cannot remove the fact, that, as a rule, the great mass of men, and the noblest, purest natures and deepest thinkers, most of all, have sadly recognized this fact of a moral disharmony between themselves and that mysterious Power which conscience discerns in nature."[1]

All the religions of the world have wrestled, and still do so, with the problem of sin, realizing that sin has disturbed the creature's relation with the Creator. Turning again to the Genesis record we read of the fear and dread which followed the first man's disobedience. The eyes of the man and the woman were opened. "And they knew that they were naked; and they sewed fig leaves together and made themselves aprons" (Genesis iii:7). The learned philosopher and the Modernist may smile at such a record and call it a "kindergarten story," but the history of religion reveals the same attempt of man to hide his nakedness. It is still so in the modern religious world. Then followed greater fear. "And they heard the voice of Jehovah-Elohim, walking in the garden. And Jehovah-Elohim called unto Adam, and said unto him, Where art thou?" (Genesis iii:8). And man answered, "I was afraid . . . and I hid myself." Fear and dread on account of

[1] "Genesis and Growth of Religion," p. 192, 193.

sin against God are accompanying factors in the development of the different religions.

"How natural, then, how inevitable indeed, that sin should powerfully influence the development of religion; as inclining men always to wrong views of the nature and character of God! How natural that we should see—as we do see—many religions which express little else than the consciousness of fear and dread; dread of a great God, or gods on high, or malign unseen powers resident in nature! How evident again, that, because the consciousness of sin awakens fear of retribution from the unseen Power against whom man has sinned, therefore, inasmuch as fear is painful, men will be unfailingly predisposed to look with favor upon such views of God, or of the world, or of both, as, if assumed to be true, diminish or remove the ground of fear! How natural thus that men should ever be inclined to imagine gods like unto themselves, who therefore, as themselves unholy, are not greatly displeased with the sinfulness of man!" [2]

Before we leave the chapter in which these great underlying facts of the religious phenomenon are revealed in embryo, we call attention to two more facts. Jehovah-Elohim sought his guilty creatures. He came on the scene of their sin and shame to seek and to save that which was lost. This expresses the Love and the Mercy of God. Then He gave the first prophetic promise. "I will put enmity between thee and the woman, and between thy seed and her seed; it shall bruise thy head and thou shalt bruise his heel" (Genesis iii:15). Greater minds and greater scholars than many of the present day Modernists and their friends, Jews who have aban-

[2] "Genesis and Growth of Religion," p. 197.

doned the faith of their fathers, have seen in this statement the redemptive program of God, in which is announced the conflict of coming ages and the final victory over evil, symbolically seen in the bruising of the head of the serpent. "The seed of the woman" is the first prediction of a coming redeemer. Many religions which came into existence long after these words were spoken contain faint echoes of a coming Saviour, and of a future blissful state of the earth and its inhabitants, a bringing back of the "golden age."

The second fact is the institution of sacrifice on the threshold of history. Cain and Abel were worshipers; Abel, whose offering was accepted, brought of the firstlings of his flock and of the fat thereof. Who instructed him to bring such an offering? Ere the first pair were driven from the garden of the Lord we read that Jehovah-Elohim made them coats of skin (Genesis iii:21). This necessitated the slaying of an animal. In all probability sacrifice as the means of the right approach into the presence of God was revealed at that time. Sacrifice holds a prominent place in all ancient religions, as well as in many others. To follow the history of sacrifices, how extensively they are propagated, altered and perverted, including the horrible customs of human sacrifice, and much else, would require a volume in itself. In Genesis true sacrifice as a means of approach into the presence of God in worship is made known. It was soon followed by perversions, but restored many centuries later, in the divinely commanded Levitical institutions among the people Israel.

Four facts underlying the religious phenomenon in the race are therefore seen in the Bible: Man's

creation, the fact of sin and its consequences; the promise and hope of redemption; the fact of sacrifice.

It would be interesting to trace the Genesis story in the deciphered inscriptions of ancient monuments, and the records and myths of the Accadians and Sumirs, who occupied ancient Chaldea, and the curious Babylonian records. Creation, the fall of man and the deluge are found, in a perverted form, in these ancient documents. A cylinder, of great antiquity, is in the British Museum, and represents a man and a woman by a tree; on one branch of the tree are two large fruits, towards which they are stretching out their hands. Behind the woman appears a serpent. This is obviously one of the most pronounced echoes of the Genesis revelation. The story of the Deluge has been reconstructed almost entire, by means of fragments of a national poem found in the library of Assurbanipal. It would be interesting to show how the original Cherubim hold a place as idolatrous imitations in the ancient religions of Egypt, Assyria, Babylonia, Moab, Ammon, Rome and Greece. It would be interesting to quote the translation of some of the recovered fragments of traditional lore, like the following Assyrian account of the deluge.

> Make a ship after this . . .
> . . . I destroy the sinner and life . . .
> . . . Cause to go in the seed of life, all of it,
> To the midst of the ship,
> The ship which thou shalt make
> Six hundred (?) cubits shall be the measure of its length
> And sixty cubits the amount of its breadth and height.
> . . . Into the deep launch it.
> I received and said to Hea my Lord,
> The shipmaking thou commandest me,
> When I shall have made
> Young and old will deride me.

It would be interesting to verify the sin and guilt

consciousness as expressed in the old Chaldean religion. We give an illustration in the following quotation, from a pentitential poem.

Lord, let the fierce anger of thy heart be appeased!
Let the God whom I know not be pacified toward me!
Let the God who knows the unknown be pacified!
Let the mother-goddess who knows the unknown be appeased!
I eat the bread of thine anger,
I drink the waters of anguish,
I feed without knowing it, on transgression against my God.
I walk without knowing it, in short-coming
Towards my mother-goddess.
Lord, my faults are very great!
Very great are my sins!

It would be interesting to go the Vedic hymns, the Zend-Avesta, to the literature of Brahmanism, and to other writings, and trace there the same perverted traditions. We must leave this great field untouched.

Man left the presence of His Maker. Sin alienated him. Leaving God's fellowship, man carried in his bosom a threefold consciousness: God-consciousness; Sin-consciousness; and the consciousness of endless being, which we may term Eternity-consciousness. They are still the universal consciousness of the entire race, in spite of the twentieth century Atheists, who, with their denials, lie against their own conscience, for Atheism is contanatural with man.

Primitive men had two sources of religious knowledge. The knowledge which they obtained in the works of creation, and traditional knowledge.

The first is mentioned in the language of the Bible in the following passages: "The heavens declare the glory of God; and the firmament showeth His handywork" (Psalm xix:1). "Because that which may be known of God is manifest in them; for God hath showed it unto them. For the invi-

sible things of Him from the creation of the world are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made, even His eternal power and Godhead; so that they are without excuse" (Romans i:19-20). There is a revelation of God in nature; all nature bears witness to the Creator; all creation manifests His glory. This knowledge of God as the Creator, His eternal power and Godhead, was in the possession of primitive men.

They also possessed knowledge by tradition. Physical life was in the beginning not limited to seventy or eighty years; man lived not for a number of decades but for centuries, because the human body had not yet been weakened by the ravages of continued vices. The primitive men knew nothing of the dread diseases and epidemics which afterwards became the curse of the race. According to the record of Genesis the first man lived nine hundred and thirty years, and Methusaleh lived thirty-nine years longer than Adam. The knowledge of the great events of the beginning of the race was then easily preserved by oral tradition.

As we have proved in the preceding chapter, the belief in one God, Monotheism, was the original faith of the great nations of the East, which later became Fetishists and Polytheists. The Monotheistic belief was handed down from those early days by tradition. According to the Biblical account there were then two classes among men, those who believed and those who believed not; the Sethites and the Cainites. The Sethites in their generations (Genesis v) preserved the primitive faith, worshiped God and sought His fellowship. The Cainites built cities and an advancing civilization.

But the world did not improve. The fallen nature

of man asserted itself. Polygamy, murder and all kinds of violence developed among those who believed not. Finally a great and mysterious corruption led to a great judgment of God (Genesis vi).[3] We quote the divine record. "And God saw that the wickedness of man was great in the earth and that every imagination of the thoughts of his heart was only evil continually. . . . And God looked upon the earth and, behold, it was corrupt; for all flesh had corrupted his way upon the earth. And God said unto Noah, the end of all flesh has come before me; for the earth is filled with violence through them; and, behold, I will destroy them with the earth" (Genesis vi:5, 13).

The deluge as God's judgment followed. The Biblical account is confirmed by distorted traditions of many ancient nations; geology also adds its testimony that such a catastrophe overtook the earth.

Noah and his house passed through the flood. The sons of Noah, Shem, Ham and Japheth, were told to replenish the earth. As stated before, they were together for a time with their descendants, speaking one language, and undoubtedly adhering to the primitive belief. Then the proud fallen nature of man manifested itself again. In the land of Shinar judgment came upon them, when instead of worshiping the Name of God, they attempted to make themselves a name. The confusion of tongues and their dispersion followed. As they separated they carried away the knowledge of God and the traditional information. Soon it was given up, and the result was departure from the living God and the establishment of idolatry.

In the Epistle to the Romans, the document which

[3]Mythology also has an echo of Genesis vi:1-6.

a greater thinker (Samuel Coleridge) pronounced "the profoundest document in the possession of the human race," the inspired writer, the Apostle Paul, gives us the after-history, as to religion, of the scattered sons of Noah and their descendants. "Because that when they knew God, they glorified Him not as God, neither were thankful; but became vain in their imaginations, and their foolish heart was darkened. Professing themselves to be wise, they became fools, and changed the glory of the uncorruptible God into an image made like to corruptible man, and to birds, and fourfooted beasts, and creeping things" (Romans i:21-23). The words which follow show what resulted morally; body, soul, and spirit were corrupted. Uncleanness through lust and vile affections was the result.

Then we read: "And even as they did not like to retain the knowledge of God, God gave them over to a reprobate mind" (Romans i:28). *Here is religious evolution*! Man knew God; he knew God as Creator; he knew God through oral tradition. He did not retain God in his knowledge; he was unthankful, because man is unholy. His proud heart refused to believe in God eternal. He set out to know God by wisdom, by searching. Then as they turned away from God, soon he became a fool. Human sinfulness and foolishness invented idolatry. Man worshiped man and his ancestors; then he turned to the birds; next came fourfooted beasts, the bull, the cat and other creatures, and finally the creeping things. Such is the religious degradation of fallen man. We remind the reader that we have seen how this inspired Apostolic account of the origin and growth of religion, this true evolutionary process, is perfectly and completely

confirmed by the research in ancient religions of the race.

The various religious systems are therefore accounted for by the Bible. They came into existence when man gave up the knowledge of the Creator. The different ancient and pagan religions are the expressions of the darkened, sinful heart of man, the gropings for light. They are efforts to bridge the chasm, which human consciousness knows to exist, on account of sin, between God and sinful man. The sacrifices of these religions are the expression of attempts at reconciliation. Thus the race drifted into Polytheism, Fetishism, and Animism. The path was not upward but downward; nor did later philosophy lead to the light. Darkness and moral corruption followed. Over it all may be written another sentence of the Bible: "The world by wisdom knew not God" (I Corinthians i:21). The true knowledge of God cannot be recovered by searching, nor can man find his way back to God and to fellowship with Him. Equally impossible is it for man to do anything to remedy the evil within.

Only a direct revelation of God can give to man the knowledge he needs. But is there such a revelation? Has God revealed Himself, and has He in this revelation solved the great problems of sin and the reconciliation of fallen man to Himself? These are most vital questions.

There lived in Ur of the Chaldees a descendant of the family of Shem. His name was Terah; he had three sons, Abram, Nahor, and Haran. Ur was, as we learn from Chaldean sources, the chief center of the worship of the moon-god, *Sin*, for the worship of idols was then fully established. Terah, as we have seen before, was a worshiper of idols, and un-

doubtedly the sons of Terah shared in the idol-worship of the father. One day Terah, Abram and his wife Sarai, Lot, his grandson, and his family, left Ur of the Chaldees to go into the land of Canaan. What occasioned this change of residence? Was it on account of their nomadic life? There was another reason. "Now Jehovah had said unto Abram, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and from thy father's house, unto a land that I will show thee" (Genesis xii:1). The New Testament gives additional information. "The God of glory appeared unto our father Abraham, when he was in Mesopotamia, before he dwelt in Haran, and said unto him, Get thee out of thy country, and from thy kindred, and come into the land which I shall show thee. Then came he out of the land of the Chaldeans, and dwelt in Haran, and from thence, when his father was dead, he removed him into this land, wherein ye now dwell" (Acts vii:2-4). Another passage of Scripture says: "By faith Abraham, when he was called to go out into a place which he should after receive for an inheritance, obeyed; and he went out, not knowing whither he went" (Hebrews xi:8).

Here again we have to face modern day denials. Destructive critics and Reformed Jews have gone so far as to deny the historicity of Abraham. With such a denial of the real existence of Abraham they brand the Biblical record as fictitious, and furthermore they impeach the trustworthiness of the Lord Jesus Christ, who spoke of Abraham as a real person.

Let us remember that for several millennia the Jews used the phrase "*Abraham Abinu*"—our father Abraham. It was used a thousand years ago. According to the New Testament it was used two

thousand years ago. The Jews used it before Christ. Isaiah, seven hundred years before Christ, wrote "Look unto Abraham your father"(Isaiah li:2), as he also writes of Abraham "the friend of God" (Isaiah lxi:8). God's covenant with Abraham is often mentioned by the Prophets and in the Psalms. Could all this possibly and logically originate in a person who never existed? It is not the object of this volume to answer destructive criticism in its assertion as to the Mosaic writings, the Pentateuch. All these arguments denying the Mosaic authorship of the Pentateuch, claiming a post-exilic origin of most of it, as well as of many Psalms and the messages of some of the Prophets, are mere assumption; they have not been proved in a scientific way.

It is strange that a member of the race which sprang from Abraham, Rabbi Lewis Browne, in his book on "This Believing World," can dismiss the great event of Abraham's call in the following parenthetical statement: "Only later did they (the Hebrews) try their fortune in Canaan in the west. (The tradition that Abraham—evidently a tribal sheikh who led one of the sorties into Canaan—came from Ur of the Chaldees, *may* have that much basis in fact.") [4]

In spite of all these denials the fact remains that the Hebrews from the beginning of their history possessed a religion of the purest Monotheism. How did it originate? We have seen that Monotheism was the religious belief of the earliest races and was followed by Polytheism. But Abraham left Polytheism and became a Monotheist. Was the universal law of the corruption of religion arrested in his

[4] "This Believing World," p. 225.

case? Did he by himself discover that the worship of the one God is the truth?

Ernest Renan in his "Studies of Religious History and Criticism" attempts a solution of the monotheistic conception and worship of the Hebrews. He says: "The Indo-European race, distracted by the variety of the universe, never by itself arrived at Monotheism. The Shemitic race, on the contrary, guided by its firm and sure sight, instantly unmasked Divinity, and without reflection or reasoning attained the purest form of religion that humanity has known." Then he gives further explanation. "When and how did the Shemitic race arrive at the notion of the divine unity, which the world has admitted on the face of its teaching? I think it was by a *primitive intuition* and from its earliest days . . . the Shemitic race reached, evidently without an effort, the notion of the supreme God."[5] But this is another assumption. The Hebrews did not have a special genius for Monotheistic religion; nor did they discover "without an effort" the truth as to the one God; nor did they maintain this belief of themselves. The Hebrews were far from being loyal to Monotheism. Their history is filled for many centuries with the sad record of their apostasy and conformation to the Fetishism and Polytheism of surrounding nations.

The question has been asked: "Is the one God a product of Israel, or is Israel a product of the one God?" [6]

Modernism and Reformed Judaism answer by saying "The one God is a product of Israel." The Hebrew nation invented and developed what they

[5]Pages 115-116.
[6]Professor Ebrard in "Apologetik; Vol. II, s 306.

term the Yahveh (Jehovah) cult. We quote once more from Rabbi Lewis Browne. He writes in "This Believing World"; as follows: "It was far from a perfect faith—this cult instituted by Moses. One must remember that it was founded over thirty two hundred years ago, by the chieftain of a horde of marauding desperadoes just come out of bondage. It was as crude and savage as were the Hebrews themselves. At its root lay the idea that there was but one god for the Hebrews. For other tribes there might be other gods, but for the Hebrews there was only Yahveh. This Yahveh (or Jehovah, as his name is usually mispronounced) was probably the spirit dwelling in a certain desert volcano called Sinai or Horeb; and from time immemorial he had been worshiped by a bedouin tribe called the Kenites. Now Moses, according to tradition, had once dwelt amongst the Kenites, and had married the daughter of their chief priest. When it became necessary for his band of runaway Hebrews to be provided with a god, it was therefore only natural for Moses to choose Yahveh. He took his forlorn followers to the very foot of the Holy Mountain of Yahveh, located somewhere in the desert, and solemnly committed them there to this god. Ten commandments were given as the basis of the worship. A covenant was entered into; a holy contract binding the Hebrews to worship Yahveh, and Yahveh to favor the Hebrews. Ten commandments were given as the basis of the worship of the deity; and it was understood that so long as they were observed, the Hebrews should be assured of his Divine protection. An "ark" was built as a haven for the roving spirit of Yahveh—it was probably a sort of tribal fetish —and the Hebrews carried it at the head of their

columns in every sortie." [7] Then this Rabbi declares that this tribal god, supposed to live in a volcano, was gradually developed. "The final idea of Yahveh accepted by the Hebrews was not the product of a sudden revelation, but a gradual evolution . . ." Centuries later the conception that he must be God was reached. "And thus was attained the first rung in the ladder which brought Yahveh up to the throne of God. Yahveh was now no more a mere glutton for sacrifices; he was the inflexible Commander of Justice." [8] All this is not original. It is the product of Gentile infidelity. All infidelity, whether it is pagan, Jewish, or "baptized," is unscientific. Destructive Criticism may boast of a scientific method; it is the very opposite.

The truth is that "Israel is the product of the one God," who in sovereign grace called the son of Terah to leave idolatry behind. He responded to the supernatural call and turned to God from idols, becoming the "friend of God." The history which follows, rightly called "sacred history," fully demonstrates that "*Israel is the product of the one God.*" This is the only possible logical explanation of Israel's wonderful history and equally wonderful preservation. Jehovah-God made unconditional promises to Abraham. "I will bless them that bless thee, and curse him that curses thee; and in thee shall all nations be blessed" (Genesis xii:3). Jehovah-God promised Abraham a posterity which should be "as the dust of the earth" (Genesis xiii:16) and as "the stars of heaven" (Genesis xv:5). They multiplied according to the promise, and centuries later they are found in Egypt; "and the children of Israel

[7] Pages 229, 230.
[8] Page 239.

were fruitful, and increased abundantly, and multiplied, and waxed exceeding mighty; and the land was filled with them" (Exodus i:7). They were not "a marauding band of desperadoes."

The beautiful story of the opening chapters of Exodus, how Jehovah-God remembered His covenant with Abraham, with Isaac and Jacob, and delivered them out of the house of bondage, and the Passover, still kept by real Jews as the great memorial feast, are branded by Rationalists as unhistorical invention as is their desert journey for forty years. Every bit of the miraculous element is ruled out. Jehovah dwelling in His glory in the midst of Israel is compared to "a sort of tribal Fetish." The Book of Leviticus with its sacrificial laws, its declaration as to the holiness of Jehovah-God, the great laws given to Israel by which they were distinguished from other nations, all, according to the destructive critical school, came into existence after the Babylonian exile, and was somehow patterned after Babylonish worship. What a master deception the Pentateuch then is! A deception which outranks any other religious deception! But is it? *A thousand times, No*! The evidence that Israel is the product of the one God, is the history of Israel itself and the God-revelation given Israel. He reveals Himself, in dealing with the nation; His character; His attributes; His omnipotence; His omniscience; His holiness, righteousness, love, mercy, grace, and His faithfulness. This manifestation of the character of God as given in Israel's history, demanding holiness and righteousness, yet long suffering and merciful, ever mindful of His covenant promises, is the logical evidence of supernatural revelation. It could not be invented by religious genius. True, as a nation, Israel

was unfaithful. God had to deal with them in judgments. Yet at all times there was a remnant preserved, which did not share the departure of the nation from Jehovah their God, a remnant which adhered to the faith of their fathers, even down to the final record of the Old Testament, when those who feared Jehovah came together to think upon His Name. (Malachi iii:16-17).

We pass over the evidences which we might gather from the poetical books, from the Psalms, and from the ethical messages of the mighty men of God, all sustaining the fact that Israel was produced by the one God. But we turn briefly to one other great evidence that the Old Testament is the revelation of Jehovah-God. This evidence is the fact of *Prophecy.*

In the so-called second part of Isaiah, written by the same Isaiah who wrote the first part, we find some important declarations, not made by Isaiah but by Jehovah, whose mouthpiece he was. "Produce your cause, saith Jehovah; bring forth your strong reasons, saith the King of Jacob. Let them bring them forth, and show us what shall happen; let them show the former things, what they be, that we may consider them, and know the latter end of them; or declare us things to come. Show the things that are to come afterward, that we may know that ye are gods" (Isaiah xli:21-23). This sublime passage contains a challenge to the idol gods of Babylon to reveal the things which have been, the former things, and the things which shall be. Then Jehovah uttered that great testimony as to Himself, "I am God, and there is none else; I am God and there is none like me." This is followed by these words: "Declaring the end from the be-

ginning, and from ancient times the things that are not yet done, saying, My counsel shall stand, and I will do all my pleasure" (Isaiah xlvi:9-10).

Vitringa defined prophecy as "a prediction of some contingent circumstance or event in the future received by immediate or direct revelation." Prophecy is the revelation of events before they come to pass; it is history pre-written. The prediction of future events, though it has often been attempted, because man longs to know the future, is an impossibility. God only knows the future, for He is omniscient. This is the meaning of the passages we quoted from Isaiah; God alone knows the future and He alone can make future events known.

The fact of Bible prophecy is disbelieved by rationalists, destructive critics, and by Modernists. If they were to concede the prophetic element in the Bible they would support an evidence that the Bible is supernatural and therefore the revelation of God. A perfect God cannot give an imperfect and faulty revelation, it must be a perfect and infallible revelation. To overcome this logic the entire fact of prophecy is ruled out. We give a few illustrations.

In the book of Isaiah we read a prophecy concerning a king, whom God could use in the restoration of Jerusalem and the temple, after the captivity of the Jews had passed. The king's name is Cyrus. But Cyrus was unborn at that time, nor had the Jews been carried into Babylon. All was over a hundred years in the future. How is this possible? If Isaiah wrote of himself it would have been impossible to give such a precise prediction. If Jehovah is nothing but "a spirit who dwelt," or was supposed to dwell "in a desert volcano," it

it would be equally impossible. But the omniscient Jehovah, who knows the end from the beginning, can name an unborn king and predict human history and make known human destiny. The modernistic infidel cannot assent to this. He has invented a theory that a certain man assumed the name of Isaiah. He cannot quite deny the historicity of a man by the name of Isaiah, who, according to the critics, wrote a very small portion of the book which bears his name. Some say a Deutero and a Trito Isaiah wrote the rest. The fraud who, claiming to be Isaiah, assumed the honored name of the great prophet, wrote, it is taught, the chapters in which King Cyrus is mentioned after Cyrus had been born and after he had commanded the rebuilding of the city and of the temple. But the whole theory of a Deutero or a Trito Isaiah, to maintain the beloved word "science," so much used by critics, is wholly unscientific. Internal evidences of the Book of Isaiah prove scientifically that there is only *one* Isaiah.

We mention the Book of Daniel. Here are found great prophecies concerning the rise and the fall of world empires. The writer of the book was Daniel, the Prime Minister of Babylon. The predictions found in this book show that the Babylonian Empire, in existence then, would be followed by the Medo-Persian; after that should come the Graeco-Macedonian, and finally the Roman World-empire. There are also further predictions as to these empires, while other prophecies concern the Jews and great future events. In order to deny the fact of prophecy, critics teach that the book came into existence in the time of the Maccabees. They claim that an unknown Jew assumed the name of Daniel,

and that the Book of Daniel was not written in the sixth century before Christ. But this is again an invention. In attacking the authenticity of the Book of Daniel the critics have suffered some of their worst defeats. In the same manner all other prophecies have been treated.

But Bible prophecy is proved a supernatural fact. It is impossible to demonstrate that the prophecies found in the Bible were written *after* the predicted events had passed into history. But it can be shown that these prophecies were spoken long before their fulfillment came. Without entering deeper into this argument we point to the prophecies of Moses concerning the people Israel, prophecies which predict their dispersion, not only dispersion past, but the present world-wide dispersion and a future restoration. Again prophets like Ezekiel, Nahum, and others, predicted the fall of Babylon, Nineveh; they predicted the history of Egypt and other great nations. The literal and startling fulfilment of these prophecies is sufficient proof that they are not human guesses, but divine revelations. The fact of fulfilled prophecy is a potent argument for the inspiration of the Bible.

Let us turn now to *Messianic prophecy*. The prophecy of a coming Redeemer is the great outstanding fact in Jehovah's revelation to His people Israel. It is unique in every way; in vain do we turn to the religious writings of ancient nations to find anything like it. Its uniqueness and harmony cannot be explained by psychological theories and inventions. The Messianic hope which permeates the history of Israel, which is still the hope of at least a part of Judaism, can only be explained on the ground of supernatural revelation; and such it is.

"The testimony of Jesus is the spirit of prophecy" (Rev. xix:10). It means that in prophecy is given the testimony of Jesus. The Greek word "Jesus" is transcribed from the Hebrew "Jehoshua," which means "Jehovah is Salvation." Peter, the fisherman of Galilee, in writing about prophecy says, that the prophets of God were inspired to write beforehand "the sufferings of Christ, and the glory that should follow" (1 Peter i:11).

The Messianic prophecy concerns the Person of the Redeemer, Jehoshuah, the Jehovah-Saviour, the Messiah-King, and His work of Redemption. By His work not only Israel is to be finally redeemed and receive the blessings and the glory promised in the oath-bound covenant of Jehovah, but the Gentiles are likewise to receive salvation, and to know Jehovah, walking in His light. When finally Messiah is King over all the earth, His glory and the knowledge of it will cover the earth as the waters cover the depth of ocean.

As we have seen, the third chapter of Genesis contains the first promise of redemption. Here both the Person of the Redeemer and His work are mentioned. He is to be the "seed of the woman"; the serpent is to bruise His heel; He will ultimately bruise the serpent's head. The word "seed" is significant and of much importance. Found for the first time in this prophetic promise, the embryo out of which all subsequent prophecy is developed, it occurs throughout the Bible. Critics have labored to eliminate this one word; they have, under the camouflage of a "new translation" (like Professor Moffatt's) attempted to invent a substitute for the word "seed." The word "seed" indicates that the coming Redeemer comes from the race, however

not as the seed of *man*, but as the seed of the *woman*. In the ancient prophecy of Noah, Shem is made prominent, inasmuch as "Jehovah-Elohim" is especially mentioned. "Blessed be 'Jehovah-Elohim' of Shem" (Genesis ix:26). In course of time the Jehovah-Elohim, forgotten by the descendants of Shem, revealed Himself to Abraham, the son of Terah. Jehovah spoke to Abraham of a "seed" in whom all the nations of the earth are to be blest. Isaac, the wonder-seed, born as the seed of promise, is the prophetic type of the true seed of the woman. How illuminating is the New Testament comment on the promised seed! "Now to Abraham and his seed were the promises made. He saith not, And to seeds, as of many; but as of one, And to thy seed, which is Christ (Messiah)" (Galatians iii:16).

The promises made to Abraham are confirmed to Isaac and to Jacob. Jacob had twelve sons, the progenitors of the twelve tribes of Israel. Out of which one is to come the seed? Again we hear the voice of prophecy. Judah is the tribe from which the promised seed is to come. (Genesis xlix:10). From the house of Jesse of the tribe of Judah is selected the youngest son, David. He becomes the chosen of Jehovah, the man after God's own heart, the shepherd-king. Jehovah promises him a son. Not Solomon is the promised One, but another, who is to be the seed. Jehovah makes a covenant with David, a covenant of grace (2 Samuel vii). Then the Spirit of God enlightened David, opened his vision, and David became a prophet. His prophecies in the Psalms are wonderful. Suffering and the glory, is the matchless theme of the inspired king.

What a mine of prophetic information are the Psalms! Here we read of the Messiah's character, His holiness and separation from sinners, His meekness and His lowliness. Here are His prayers prewritten. But above everything else we find in the Psalms the Messiah's rejection and His sufferings. What a prophecy is the Twenty-second Psalm! Here we read the story of the coming One, His suffering from the side of Jews and Gentiles, and deeper still His suffering as the forsaken One. The story of the Cross is revealed in an astonishing manner. All through the Psalms the humiliation of the Messiah, His suffering and rejection, are prophetically pictured. Again we read of His resurrection (Psalm xvi) and of His ascension to the right hand of God (Psalms lxviii and cx). David knew that the seed would be his son and his Lord. The glory of the Messiah was seen by David and is recorded in the Psalms. The One whom the people Israel rejected, whom the Gentiles refused to own as King (Psalm ii) will be enthroned on Zion's hill and receive the nations for His inheritance and the ends of the earth for His possession. David beheld the glories of His Kingdom, the ingathering and the worship of the nations (Psalm lxxii).

The life of David itself is a prophecy. He passed through deep suffering, and was the anointed one of Jehovah, yet rejected and crownless. Finally he was triumphant over all his enemies and crowned king over all Israel. Thus his own experience foreshadows the experience of the Messiah.

Solomon reigned in peace for forty years. The riches and glory of his kingdom were typical of the kingdom of the Messiah.

The prophecies of the sixteen prophetic books of

the Bible unfold the same theme, Messiah, His suffering and His glory. The greatest of all prophecies are written in the Book of Isaiah. Some twenty times Isaiah speaks of Him as the Holy One of Israel. The Messiah is Jehovah, the I AM; He is Creator and Redeemer. Israel is to be saved by Him; all the ends of the earth are invited to look unto Him and be saved. (Chapters xl-xlix.)

But the Creator-Redeemer is manifested as a man, the seed of the woman. He is to be born a child, yet the child is, *a Son given.* "For unto us a child is born, unto us a son is given; and the government shall be upon His shoulder: and His name shall be called Wonderful, Counsellor, The Mighty God, The everlasting Father, The Prince of Peace" (Isaiah ix:6).[9] As He is the seed of the woman, His supernatural birth is announced. (Chapter vii:14). We read of His character (Chapter xlii:1-3); of His message (Chapter xli:1-2); of His miraculous power which He would manifest (Chapter xxxv:6). Though He is Jehovah, the Redeemer of Israel, He comes in humiliation, the Servant of Jehovah. In five chapters the Servant's path is traced prophetically (Chapters xlix-liv). It finds its goal in the fifty-third chapter. Here prophecy pictures the Holy One, the Creator-Redeemer, as despised and rejected, bearing the griefs and sorrows of others; wounded for their transgressions, bruised for their iniquities. He is seen carrying the iniquities of all, when as a lamb

[9]Some critics have stated that inasmuch as Isaiah says, "A child *is* born, a son *is* given," the prophecy could not mean Christ, who was born 700 years after this was written. The objection is puerile. The prophet is projected into the future and beholds that which is to come as already accomplished.

he was brought to the slaughter, and opened not His mouth. He made His soul an offering for sin; He was stricken for the transgression of His people. He died, but rose from the dead, and entered into glory.

What power has blinded the understanding of men who claim superior scholarship to attempt the denial of these prophecies? What power is it which leads them to suggest different theories to explain away the supernatural character of these predictions, so that the only Saviour of man might be discredited? What credulity is needed to accept their "findings"! If this progressive unfolding of Messianic prophecy is the production of human genius, why, then, is such a production confined to the Hebrew race exclusively, and nothing like it found anywhere else?

The most prominent invention is the theory that the Messiah is not a Person, but the nation Israel. This theory is taught by Reformed Judaism, and has been accepted by the Destructive Critical School. It is taught in all the Modernistic seminaries, like Union Theological Seminary of New York, and other institutions of the leading denominations.

Let Rabbi Browne speak once more. After declaring in his book that the five books of Moses were mostly written after the Babylonian exile, that the many myths and taboos found in the Pentateuch strikingly resemble those of the Babylonians, that the priestly law-code is post-exilic, he writes: "This Jewish law-code was prepared solely in anticipation of the day when the old Messianic promise would be fulfilled. No one seemed to know just when that day would come; but all expected it in the near, the very near future. And the greatest prophet of the exile, that unnamed genius whom we

call Deutero (second) Isaiah, pictured the glory of that day in words that the Jews never forgot. He brought the self-exaltation of Israel to its climax, investing the future of the people with a dignity and a significance such as no earlier prophet had dreamed of. According to this unnamed prophet, the whole people of Israel was the Messiah, 'the Anointed One.' All Israel was 'the suffering servant of the Lord,' the 'light unto the Gentiles, that the Lord's salvation may be unto the end of the earth.' . . . Such was the Gospel of that unnamed Jew whose words are recorded in Chapters 40-55 of the Book of Isaiah." [10]

Logically this interpretation, that Israel, the nation, is the Messiah, is impossible. The Servant of Jehovah is an individual and not a nation. The way the Critics attempt to overcome this difficulty we cannot follow here. Let us remember this modern interpretation is unknown in the earliest Rabbinical literature.[11] The great scholars of Christianity, whose learning and piety made them master-teachers, never doubted the ancient Jewish, as well as historic Christian, interpretation of the suffering Servant of Jehovah, the sin-bearer, as being the Messiah.

Isaiah the prophet also beheld the glory of the Messiah and the glory of His Kingdom. He and his contemporary, Micah, predicted a glorious future for Israel, the nations, and even for creation itself. Jerusalem is to become the great center of the future kingdom. Nations will learn war no more. They will turn their swords into plowshares and

[10] "This Believing World," p. 224.

[11] The reverend and ancient book *Zohar* interprets Isaiah liii as meaning the Person of Messiah.

their spears into pruning hooks. That which has been attempted, and is now being attempted among the leading nations, to outlaw war, will then come to pass, when nations will learn war no more and when righteousness and peace will kiss each other. Groaning creation will find rest. "The wolf also shall dwell with the lamb, and the leopard shall lie down with the kid; and the calf and the young lion together, and a little child shall lead them" (Isaiah xi:6). Other prophets add their God-given testimony. Ezekiel beheld the drama of the final conflict, and described the future house of the Lord, the returning Lord with His glory, the blessings which follow, and the dwelling of the Lord in the midst of His people. Daniel saw the Messiah, coming in the clouds of heaven to claim His kingdom. Prophet after prophet speaks of the Messianic hope.

This hope never died in Israel. It is still alive today. Without this hope the whole history of Israel and its preservation is an unsolvable enigma.

Messianic prophecy and the Messianic hope reach back to the beginning of the race. Its promise is to bring man back into the fellowship of God, to bridge the gulf, to take away the curse, and bring righteousness and glory to this earth, so that finally heaven and earth join into a never ending "Hallelujah."

All this cannot be accounted for on purely naturalistic ground. The only solution is the supernatural. Grant the existence of a supreme Being, all-intelligent, all-wise, all-loving, and the objections against the supernatural, brought by the finite mind of man, crumble into dust.

We see then in the Old Testament something different from the religious development of other nations. We behold a supernatural revelation.

That revelation makes known God and His character; it brings God into history. God has spoken. He has spoken in Prophecy. For prophecy is not an empty dream. It promises what is nowhere else promised.

Has the Messianic hope been realized? Is the world still waiting for this Messianic hope? What is Christianity? Is Christianity nothing but a religious system? Is it *a* religion? Is Christianity final, or is man to discover another and a better religion? These are the questions which will be answered in our concluding chapter. And vital questions they are.

CHAPTER V

Christianity

Is Christianity a Religion? Such a question will occasion surprise in not a few minds, for we have accustomed ourselves to speak of heathen religions, of the Mohammedan religion, the Buddhistic religion, and also of the Christian religion. The common practice is to speak of the great religions of the world, Islam, Hinduism, Buddhism and Confucianism, and then to include Christianity as one of the great world-religions. In doing so we put Christianity on the same level with these other religions. The same is done with Him, who is not the founder of a religion, but something infinitely higher, the Lord Jesus Christ. He is often called the founder of a great religion, a great religious leader, and put into the same class with Zoroaster, Buddha Gautama, Confucius, Socrates and Mohammed. It is erroneous to call Christianity *a* religion, and it is equally erroneous to call the Lord Jesus Christ the founder of *a* religion.

We have seen what the great religious systems of the world are. We have followed the growth of different religions. We have learned something of their origin. We saw that the race knew God in the beginning, and that the sinful heart of man gave up the original knowledge of God as Creator. Polytheism and other false worship followed; foolish philosophies were originated. Men tried to find that which cannot be discovered by searching, to know that which is unknowable so far as man's power is concerned, to satisfy the craving of his soul and to be back in the fellowship of God. Such is the history of religion.

Is then our Christianity such an attempt to solve the problems of human existence, a searching for the truth, or a philosophical effort to explain God, the universe, man, his origin and relation to the supreme Being? If so, then it is *a* religion and must be classed with the other existing religious systems, which have been in the past and which are in the world today. If such is the case then Christianity is as unable to give assurance to man, or to satisfy the soul-hunger of man, or to bring man back to God, as the other religions are unable to accomplish this result. If so, then Christianity is not trustworthy. Furthermore, we should be forced to look for something else, something which man needs and which is not found in Christianity.

It would then be entirely logical, to say, as is being said today among the ever increasing rationalists in Christendom, that since Christianity is a religion, it has defects as other religions have defects, that it is, for this reason, not the final religion. Modernism is aiming at this very thing. This movement tries to strip Christianity of certain elements, thus reducing it to a religion, and, having accomplished this, to produce a new religion, better suited to the needs of the times than Christianity. This is the goal of Modernism.

But is Christianity a religion? No! *Christianity is supernatural revelation.*

We have learned that in the Old Testament is found the supernatural revelation of God. But Christianity is the highest of all supernatural revelation. What is supernaturally revealed in Christianity is final; *there can be no higher revelation than that which is given in Christianity.* If Christianity is robbed of its supernatural character then

it is a mere religion and has no more power to save man, to bring the knowledge of God to the starving souls of men, than Buddhism, Brahmanism or Confucianism. This robbery of the supernatural element of Christianity is being carried on today. It has had its awful effects on the Oriental races with their religions. Ever since the "Parliament of Religions" during the World's Fair in Chicago in 1894, Orientals, Hindus, Buddhists, and others, have considered the countries called "Christian" a good field for their propaganda. They call Christianity a "sister-religion," and some go so far as to claim that Buddhism has something better to offer. This serious situation is made worse by the fact that Modernism has its missionaries among those nations, not to save their souls from eternal night, but to produce in some way a feeling of kinship, and through western influences lift them out of moral degradation. These missionaries in teaching Christianity eliminate the supernatural. Instead of speaking of the eternal Christ, His Godhead and His great work, they speak of the "Christ-spirit," as if the Christ-spirit had power to save man.

We shall now see in what the supernatural revelation of Christianity consists. We shall point out seven supernatural facts found in Christianity, which are the evidences that Christianity is not a human-religious system, that it is not the result of a religious evolutionary process. These are the seven facts.

I. A Supernatural Foundation. II. A Supernatural Person. III. His Supernatural Work of Redemption. IV. His Supernatural Survival. V. A Supernatural Message. VI. A Supernatural Power. VII. A Supernatural Future Manifestation and Consummation.

1. *A Supernatural Foundation.* The foundation of Christianity is the supernatural revelation in that part of the Bible which we call the Old Testament. It has been assumed that Christianity or, as is generally said, the Christian religion was developed from Judaism. If this were true, then Christianity also might be looked upon as being the product of evolution in the realm of religion, and if so, then what hinders Christianity from being ousted by another evolutionary religious system?

But Christianity is not fully developed Judaism. It is the confirmation of the God-revelation in the Old Testament; it is the fulfilment, or at least partial fulfilment of the supernaturally revealed Messianic hope; it is crowning God-revelation in the manifestation of Him whose coming had been announced for thousands of years, and finally, it is in Him and through Him, the highest revelation of the Fatherhood of God and the highest possible redemption and glory of those human beings who believe and accept this revelation. Such is Christianity.

The basis of all is the Old Testament supernatural revelation. *Without this foundation the New Testament would be a deception. And without Christianity in its supernatural character the Old Testament revelation would be equally a deception unworthy of our confidence.*

But what is the drift of modern Theology? Look at its parentage. Bible Criticism which has become a destructive factor started in the eighteenth century. The man who is called the "Sir Isaac Newton of Criticism" is Jean Astruc. He was a French physician, a Freethinker, who led an immoral life. In 1753 he wrote a small volume on "Conjectures

Regarding the Original Memoirs in the Book of Genesis." In this work Astruc quoted the two names of God used in Genesis, the names *Elohim* and *Jehovah*, and claimed that the use of these two names demonstrated that two different documents had been used in the composition of the book. He invented the hypothesis of an Elohist and Jehovist writer. It was reserved for a German rationalist, Professor Eichhorn, to formulate the denial of the unity and inspiration of Genesis into a system. He coined the phrase "Higher Criticism," and has been called the "father" of it. He introduced successfully the theory of Astruc into the theological institutions of Germany. On account of his learning the theory took hold of the minds of thousands. Who was Professor Eichhorn? Let another Critic answer. Ewald, himself such an advocate of this theory, wrote: "We cannot fail to recognize that, from the religious point of view, the Bible was to him a closed Book."

Such is the paternity of the now widely accepted Bible-Criticism. After Eichhorn came others, Professors Vater and Hartman, who tried to undermine the Mosaic authorship of Genesis by still another theory. Professor De Wette, of Heidelberg, followed closely in the steps of Eichhorn. Bleek improved the theory still further. Then we mention Hupfeld, Kuenen, Davidson, Robertson Smith, Canon Driver, George Adam Smith, Briggs, W. Harper, Marcus Dods, down to the present generation with such advocates of the theory as Drs. Shailer Mathews, Harry Emerson Fosdick, and others. Sir George Adam Smith, for instance, says what all Modernists believe today: that "the framework of the first

eleven chapters of Genesis is woven from the raw material of myth and legend."

This destructive criticism is called "scientific." Is it? Canon Dyson Hague has described the Pentateuch Criticism as follows:

"They conjecture that these four suppositive documents were not compiled and written by Moses, but were probably constructed somewhat after this fashion: For some reason, and at some time, and in some way, someone, no one knows who, or why, or when, or where, wrote Jehovist. Then someone else, no one knows who, or why, or when, or where, wrote another document, which is now called Elohist. And then at a later time, the critics only know who, or why, or when, or where, an anonymous personage, whom we may call Redactor I, took in hand the reconstruction of these documents, introduced new material, harmonized the real and apparent discrepancies, and divided the inconsistent accounts of one event into two separate transactions. Then some time after this, perhaps one hundred years or more, no one knows who, or why, or when, or where, some anonymous personage wrote another document, which they styled Deuteronomist. And after awhile another anonymous author, no one knows who, or why, or when, or where, whom we will call Redactor II, took this in hand, compared it with Jehovist and Elohist, revised them with considerable freedom and, in addition, introduced quite a body of new material. Then someone else, no one knows who, or why, or when, or where, probably, however, about 525, or perhaps 425, wrote the Priestly Code; and then another anonymous Hebrew, whom we may call Redactor III, undertook to incorporate this with the triplicated composite Jehovist, Elohist and Deuteronomist, with what they call radactional additions and insertions."

Professor William Henry Green, later Professor at Princeton, an able scholar, in his masterwork, "The Unity of Genesis" says: "All tradition, from whatever source it is derived, whether inspired or uninspired, unanimously affirms that the first five books of the Bible were written by one man, and that man was Moses. There is no counter testimony in any quarter." No answer to Professor Green's great book has been published.

The destructive criticism tends toward the ruin

of both the supernatural God-revelation and the prophetic element in the Old Testament, as well as the overthrow of the supernaturalism of Christianity. It would rob us of everything.

II. A Supernatural Person. Modernism calls that Person, Jesus, the Carpenter's Son, or, the Prophet of Galilee, terms used nineteen hundred years ago by the Sadducees, the modernists of that period. We prefer to call Him, the Lord Jesus Christ, the eternal Son of God, Jehoshuah, the Jehovah-Saviour.

We listen to Him in one of the great testimonies concerning Himself. "*And He said unto them, Ye are from beneath, I am from above; ye are of this world; I am not of this world*" (John viii:23). [1]

This sublime utterance was made in the presence of the religious Jewish teachers of that day. The testimony is unique. No religious teacher of the past ever dared to make such a statement. Zoroaster, Buddha Gautama, Confucius, Laotze, Socrates, Plato and Mohammed never made a similar claim. Why not? Because they knew their origin was of this world, that they were from beneath. Yet some of these religious teachers and leaders were centuries later declared by their followers to have possessed divinity. But not one of them made such a claim as the Lord Jesus Christ did. These religious leaders of past ages were teachers of ethics, who claimed to possess truth and light. But did any one of them ever say, as the Lord said, "I am

[1] In our exposition of the "*Gospel of John*," we give indisputable evidence that the fourth Gospel is the work of the Apostle John, written by him towards the close of the first century. The historic evidence of the Johannine authorship is so perfect that the authenticity of the Gospel of John is as firmly established as the authenticity of the Synoptics.

the Truth" and "I am the Light of the World?" They spoke of a way of approach to the Unseen; but none of them ever said: "I am the Way" or "I am the Door." They spoke of the soul-need of man, but none ever dared to say, "I am the Bread of Life; he that cometh to me shall never hunger; and he that believeth on me shall never thirst" (John vi:35). They also spoke of life; but none ever declared "I am the Life," nor do we hear them giving the assurance, "Verily, verily, I say unto you, he that believeth on me hath everlasting life" (John vi:47). They spoke of an hereafter: Buddha invented his meaningless *Nirvana*, and Mohammed his sensual heaven. None of these religious leaders ever said: "Let not your heart be troubled, ye believe in God, believe also in me. In my Father's house are many mansions: if it were not so I would have told you. I go to prepare a place for you" (John xiv:1-2). No religious teacher ever demanded worship for himself, even as the supreme Being is worshiped. But the Lord Jesus Christ said: "All men should honor the Son, even as they honor the Father. He that honoreth not the Son honoreth not the Father which sent Him" (John v:23). Those religious leaders spoke of the works of a higher being, or of gods; none ever said, "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work" (John v:17). Resurrection from the dead as a demonstration of the power of God is one of the great revelations of the Old Testament. Only God can bring life out of death. The Lord Jesus Christ alone made the claim: "As the Father raiseth up the dead, and quickeneth them; even so the Son quickeneth whom He will" (John v:21) and He demonstrated this power by

raising the dead. Did Zoroaster, Buddha or any other religious leader ever make a similar claim? Did they ever raise the physically dead?

But more than that. The Lord Jesus Christ claimed equality with God. He spoke of Himself as being one with God; He told His disciples that seeing Him meant seeing the Father. "I and My Father are one" (John x:30). "He that hath seen Me hath seen the Father" (John xiv:9). He also claimed many times that He came into the world as the Sent One of the Father. "I came forth from the Father, and am come into the world: again, I leave the world, and go to the Father" (John xvi:28). Where do we hear in the realm of religion a voice like His? Then He bore a definite witness as to His pre-existence. Before the astonished Jews He said: "Verily, verily, I say unto you, Before Abraham was, I am" (John viii:58). Their keen intellects realized at once that He claimed to be "Jehovah" the eternal, self-existing One, and they picked up stones to stone Him. Engaged in prayer, to which His eleven disciples listened, occupied in this holy exercise He uttered this request: "And now, O Father, glorify Thou Me with Thine own self, with the glory which I had with Thee before the world was" (John xvii:5).

All this confirms the fact that He is from above; that He is not of this world. He is supernatural. All the great attributes of Godhead are ascribed to Him throughout the New Testament Scriptures: Eternity, Immutability, Omnipotence, Omniscience and Omnipresence. He manifested these attributes when living on earth. He displayed the Creator's power. The miracles He did are not superstitious

fables; the record carries with it the deep attestation of truth and genuineness.

Let us look also at His moral glory as an evidence that He is from above and not of this world. Here the contrast with other religious teachers and leaders is equally striking and conclusive. He towers over and above every other human being. All religious teachers and all others, though teaching morality, were fallible, sinful, erring creatures. Some of them, like Mohammed, were even sensual impostors.

The Gospels show forth His perfect sinlessness. He never confessed sin. He taught His disciples to pray for forgiveness. He never asked for pardon. There is no hint of guilt anywhere nor is there the slightest trace of personal blameworthiness. He knew no sin, which means He had no sin-nature; and therefore He did not sin. He challenged His enemies to scrutinize His life and to convince Him of sin. There was no answer to this challenge. In every way He was undefiled; He was perfect. He never made a mistake; there was no need for Him to recall a single word, nor did He ever need to vindicate Himself or to retrace a single step.

We also have the record of His superhuman knowledge. Well did Peter say, "Lord, Thou knowest all things." He read Nathanael's heart, and knew what happened under the fig tree (John i:4). He knew the whole life story of the Samaritan woman at the well (John iv:1-15). He knew the coin in the bottom of the lake, which a fish had picked up (Matt. xvii:24-27). He knew the heart troubles of His disciples, as He knew the secret plottings of His enemies. "He needed not that any

man should testify of man; for He knew what was in man" (John ii:25).

And His lovely character of meekness, lowliness, unostentatiousness, kindness, love and mercy! The Gospel records have been called "terse"; they cover but a fraction of His earthly life. Yet the record is so deep and inexhaustible that the last word can never be spoken.

And so it is with His sublime teachings. They reveal the wisdom which is from above. Never man spake as this man, was the testimony of the officers sent to arrest Him (John vii:46). Other teachers gave instructions and also gave ethical teachings, mixed with puerile, unreasonable and foolish assertions. Why did the Lord Jesus Christ never teach anything which would appear nineteen hundred years later as unreasonable?

The answer to all, and much more which we must pass by, is simply this, He is from above and not of this world.

He is not the product of the human race. The law of evolution can never explain Him. If He is only a human being, a man like any other man, then His Person is an unexplainable enigma, which baffles all solution.

The words we have quoted, "I am from above . . . I am not of this world" solve it all and explain everything.

He was truly man. How did He become man? Since He was from above, pre-existent, one with God, sharing His holiness and righteousness, a natural birth is beyond the range of possibility. If He came into human existence like any other human being, He would have had a fallen nature, the nature of sin. His self-witness of being not of this world

would be untrue. All He was, His character, His words and His works, demand a supernatural entrance into human existence. And such is revealed in the Holy Scriptures. He is the promised seed of the woman, the fulfilment of prophecy. He is the child born and the Son given, the One "whose goings forth have been from of old, from everlasting" (Micah v:2). In the very first chapter of the New Testament we read that He was "conceived by the Holy Spirit," as was announced to His Virgin-mother, Mary of Nazareth, in fulfilment of Isaiah's prophecy (Isaiah vii:14). His human body was called into existence by a creative act of the Spirit of Life and Power. This explains all and demonstrates the supernaturalness of Himself and His Life.

Modernists tell us, after their futile attempts to impeach the reliability of Matthew's and Luke's account of the Virgin-birth, that it is really unessential whether we believe in such a biological miracle or not. It is *all-essential*, for without it we have no real Saviour, no divine Lord. And they also say that Christ never mentioned His Virgin-birth. What then did He mean when He said, "I am from above . . . I am not of this world?" This is His testimony to His supernatural birth. It is the rock of Christianity. It confirms the God-revelation in the Old Testament. If this supernatural birth is abandoned, as it is today in a part of Protestant Christendom, the collapse of supernatural Christianity, with its assurance, its hope, comfort and peace, must inevitably follow. Those who accept this denial have stepped on the road which leads into the fog of uncertainty and finally into the night of despair.

But how does Rationalism explain the fact that

the Virgin-birth is recorded in the documents of Christianity, and that the Church has from the beginning held this faith?

They tell us that there is a superstitious tendency in the human race to claim for the founders of different religions, like Buddha Gautama, Zoroaster and others, a pre-human existence and a supernatural birth, and that, therefore, the Christian conception concerning Christ must likewise be looked upon as such a superstitious belief. Some claim that the Apostles derived their conception of Christ from this source, while others think it was the product of their own brains, because they were such enthusiastic admirers of Jesus. Still others have adopted the religious-historic method. They insist that when the founders of the Christian religion, the Apostles, abandoned Judaism, they absorbed these current superstitions in order to invest the new religion with the supernatural, and thus reproduced the legends of a supernatural birth in their belief, only in a highly developed form.

Let us look at these claims. Without taking all the different religious leaders into consideration, we shall take as an illustration Buddha Gautama. We select him for the reason that Buddhists assert that Christianity has borrowed its teachings from Buddhism. German sceptics have also brought the charge that Christianity aped after Buddhism. Theosophists, so numerous today, and Esoteric Buddhists, have taken hold of this false claim and have made much of it. Some Modernists have also fallen in line, even going so far as to claim that Christ Himself followed Buddha and taught as he taught, self-renunciation, etc. The Gospels, according to this theory, are in part a repetition of the

life and the legends of Buddha. Another theory is that the Alexandrian Church worked over the Gospel story at a later date, introducing the record of a supernatural birth and other supernatural elements. In other words, the Gospels are plagiarized and fraudulent documents, and therefore, untrustworthy. The whole assertion is so very thin that some rationalistic scholars and thinkers have themselves given an answer.

For instance, Ernest Renan says of the Gospel of Mark that, "It is full of minute observations, coming doubtless from an eyewitness"; he also asserts that the Synoptics, Matthew, Mark and Luke, were composed in substantially their present form, by the men whose names they bear. They were not later embellished by legends and myths. As they were written in a historic age they were open to serious challenge. But in vain do we look for any contradiction in contemporary history.

Who was Buddha? According to Buddhist authorities, Gautama was born in the sixth century B. C., as the son of a prominent Rajah, about eighty miles from Benares. His mother, the principal wife of the Rajah, was for many years childless and died not long after the birth of this her only son. He married in his youth and lived a life of pleasure. After the birth of a son, certain morbid tendencies came to a head. He left secretly his magnificent palace and began a life of asceticism. For a number of years he tried Hindu self-mortification, which almost made an end of his life. Then he abandoned asceticism and became atheistic. He passed through great struggles. Sitting under the shade of an Indian fig tree, the famous Boddhi tree, he finally gained the victory. He began to preach

self-emancipation as the way of life. Thus began his career as "The Enlightened." He was now a Buddha and claimed to have obtained *Nirvana.* Then he gathered groups of disciples, whom he formed into an order of mendicants; he also organized female followers into a society of nuns. The idea, invented many centuries later, that he left his palace to become a saviour, is totally unconfirmed by the earliest Buddhist literature. He became a Buddha when he was thirty-five years old, and died a natural death from indigestion when eighty. Before his death his system had attained a very wide popularity. This is the best and most reliable information gained from Buddhist literature several centuries before Christ.

The Buddhist Legends. There are many legends which cluster round the life and work of Buddha Gautama. The Buddhist Canon was fixed by the Council of Patna 242 B. C. In vain do we look in this Canon for these Buddhist legends, as to his divinity, pre-existence, and supernatural birth. They were then (some 200 years after his death) unknown. Yet these legends which came later to the foreground are generally taken, by Theosophists and others, to be the source of a good part of the story of Christ in the Gospels.

These legends are "drawn from certain poetical books written much later, and holding about the same relation to the Buddhist Canon that the 'Paradise Lost' and 'Paradise Regained' of Milton bear to the Scriptures of the Old and New Testaments. Who would think of quoting 'Paradise Lost' in any sober comparison of Biblical truth with the teaching of other religions?"[2]

[2]Oriental Religions and Christianity, p. 162.

The fact is that these legends about Buddha and his supernatural origin cover at least two centuries before Christ and almost six centuries after Christ. There is more than a grave suspicion that some of them are imitations of what is written as to Christ in the New Testament. The inventors of these legends evidently wanted to link the name of Buddha with Christ, just as Hindus have named Him as an incarnation of Vishnu for the western world, as was Krishna for the eastern. Buddha himself gives evidence against those legends, before they ever came into existence. He denied that he was divine, but distinctly claimed to be nothing but a plain man. He had no faith whatever in a divine revelation. He rejected the authority of the Vedas, which were acclaimed as inspired. All he knew he had acquired by himself. He was a teacher of self-salvation. He did not come to save men, to bring them back into fellowship with God; but he tried to show men the way by which they could save themselves.[3]

Let us now examine briefly a sample of the invented legends. The Birth-Stories of Ceylon (Jatakas) represent him as having been born five hundred and thirty times, after he became a foreordained Buddha. As a specimen of his preparatory experience of being fitted for Buddhaship, this source informs us that he was born eighty-three times an ascetic, twenty-four times a Brahman, eighteen times a monkey; as a deer he appeared ten times, as an elephant six times, as a lion ten times. At least once he was a thief, a gambler, a frog, a hare and a snipe. He was also embodied

[3]Christianity stripped of the supernatural, of the Cross and its blessed redemption, brings the same results: salvation by character.

in a tree. And upon this ridiculous nonsense is based the assertion that he was pre-existent!

Let us hear about his supernatural birth. According to the so-called "Northern Legends," Buddha Gautama was incarnated for the purpose of bringing relief to a distressed world. He was miraculously conceived—entering his mother's side in the form of a white elephant. All nature manifested its joy on the occasion. The ocean bloomed with flowers; all beings from many worlds showed their wonder and sympathy. Many miracles were wrought even during his childhood, and every part of his career was filled with marvels. At his temptation Mara, representing Satan, came to him mounted on an elephant sixteen miles high and surrounded by an army of demons eleven miles deep.[4] Upon such foolish inventions rests the assumption of Modernists that the Incarnation of our Lord, His Virgin-birth, is also an unbelievable legend. If the birth account of Christ had in it the statement of an elephant sixteen miles high, or similar nonsense, its rejection would be more than warranted. But put over against such delusions the simple, chaste and reasonable account of the Virgin-birth of the Son of God.

The heavenly messenger said to Mary of Nazareth: "Behold, thou shalt conceive in thy womb, and bring forth a son, and shalt call His name, Jesus. He shall be great, and shall be called the Son of the Highest: and the Lord God shall give unto Him the throne of His father David: and He shall reign over the house of Jacob forever; and of His kingdom there shall be no end." And when Mary answered, "How shall this be, seeing I know

[4]Oriental Religions and Christianity, p. 164-168.

not a man?" the Angel gave her this information: "The Holy Spirit shall come upon thee, and the power of the Highest shall overshadow thee: therefore also that holy thing which shall be born of thee shall be called the Son of God" (Luke i:31-35). It is so simple, and yet so deep that the depths have never been sounded!

The Buddha and other legends and similar fables came into existence centuries after these religious teachers lived. No such thing happened in regard to the Gospel records, though we are often told that the supernatural facts in the life of Christ, His birth, His miracles and other events were added later; that they cannot be trusted, and that hence they must be considered forgeries. The historical evidences of the Gospel records, their genuineness and reliability, are so strong that the charge brought against them that later hands added legends, looks to the writer like a wilful attempt to undermine their authority.

We cannot even attempt to follow similar legends in connection with Zoroaster and other religious teachers. All, every one of them, are from beneath. All, every one of them, are of the world and breathe the things of the world. *Only One is from above and not of this world, Jesus Christ, the Son of the living God.*

III. His Supernatural Work of Redemption. The Lord Jesus Christ, the God-Man, constantly used two expressions which demonstrate His pre-existence and also the work which He came to do. These two expressions are "*I came*" and "*I am sent.*" No natural man can claim consciousness of having come into existence to accomplish a certain great work; nor can a natural man say that he is conscious of

having been sent directly by God, and then in intimate fellowship with God to fulfill his divinely appointed mission. Certain men may have claimed to have come, and to have been sent, as instruments of God, but their claims were self-deception and hallucination.

But let us listen to the claims of the Lord Jesus Christ. "For the Son of Man is come to save that which was lost" (Matt. xviii:11). "The Son of Man came not to be ministered unto, but to minister and to give His life as a ransom for many" (Mark x:45). "I am come in My Father's name" (John v:43). "I am not come of Myself, but He that sent Me is true, whom ye know not" (John vii:28). "I proceeded forth and came from God; neither came I from Myself, but He sent Me" (John viii:42). "I am come a light into the world" (John xii:46). "And no man hath ascended up to heaven, but He that came down from heaven, even the Son of Man which is in heaven" (John iii:13). "I came down from heaven, not to do Mine own will, but the will of Him that sent Me" (John vi:38). "I am the living bread which came down from heaven" (John vi:41). "And the Father Himself who hath sent Me, hath born witness of Me . . . and whom He hath sent ye believe not" (John v:36, 38). "The living Father hath sent Me" (John vi:57). He spoke of Himself in prayer as the Sent One (John xvii:3, 21, 23, 25).

Such assertions as these demand His pre-existence and the execution of a work for which He was sent, and for which He came into the world. What was this work? Did He come to be a reformer, to advocate the abolition of certain then existing evils, like slavery? Did He come to live before men a perfect

human life so that they might imitate His example? Did He come to be a way-shower? Or did He come to bring a philosophy which explains the mysteries of life? Or was it for the purpose of founding a new and more satisfactory religion?

If any of these things as well as others unmentioned, were the object of His coming and of His work on earth, then He would be upon the same level with reformers, good, moral men, philosophers and founders of religions, who preceded Him. Into this class He is put by all who deny the real object of His mission for which God, His Father sent Him.

But let us proceed at once to the work which He came to do, and the reason He was sent from above. *He came to seek and to save that which is lost. He was sent to be the Saviour and Redeemer of man.*

It is very true that in His coming we have the highest God-revelation. He is the image of the invisible God; in His Person God was made visible. "No man hath seen God at any time; the only begotten Son, who is in the bosom of the Father, He hath declared Him" (John i:18). It is very true that He brought God down to man. But how is man to be brought back to God? His incarnation could not accomplish this greatest need. Nor could His words of wisdom and comfort, His blameless, holy life bring this about.

Who is going to answer the age-long question, "How can a man be just with God?" Man needs salvation. How can he be saved? The human race, as we have seen, possessing God and sin consciousness, bowed down with the burden of guilt, has struggled unsuccessfully to find an answer. Everywhere in the history of religion from its very start we find sacrifices and self-mortification as means to

remove sin and guilt consciousness. They were all in vain. The chasm between a holy God and sinful man remained unbridged. Man could not himself find his way back to God. He tried self-improvement and good works; but all in vain. Job voiced the failure of such attempts. "If I wash myself with snow water, and make my hands as never so clean; yet shalt Thou plunge me in the ditch, and mine own clothes shall abhor me" (Job ix:30, 31). If man is to know the way back to God and to know how he can be reconciled, God alone can give him this knowledge. Not man, the offender, can dictate terms of peace and reconciliation to the Being whose laws he has broken, but the offended One must state the terms which suit His own holy character and on which He can afford to display His divine mercy.

Has God done this? If He has done so, if He has made known the way back to Himself whereby man can once more enjoy His fellowship and call Him (as a forgiven sinner) "my God and my Father," this way must be found unmistakably in His own self-revelation. And the way He has made known must satisfy His eternal righteousness, must vindicate His holiness, and must also make known His character of Love and Mercy. If His self-revelation concerned only His Omnipotence, His Omniscience and His Omnipresence, and not the needs of a world of sinners and how those needs have been met, it would be an insufficient revelation omitting the most vital object.

The Bible answers all. In the Old Testament revelation we find more than a revelation of a coming Redeemer; we find also the work of that Redeemer, showing that He is the One who brings

man back to God, and procures for man redemption and acceptance with God. This great work can be traced throughout the Old Testament, in history, in divinely appointed institutions of a typical character, and in direct prophecies. Although such a statement is met by the ridicule of certain religious leaders, we shall pass over their denials; the positive and constructive teaching of the divine revelation is the best answer.

Next to the first prophetic promise (Genesis iii:15) we have an act of God, which is the beginning of a line of salvation-revelation, extending through the entire Bible and which finds its glorious end in the work of the Lord Jesus Christ as the Redeemer of men. "Unto Adam also and to his wife did Jehovah Elohim make coats of skin" (Genesis iii:21). The man and the woman tried to cover their nakedness, but the fig leaves were insufficient. Then God provided a covering. An innocent creature, presumably, had to be slain. Its blood was shed and through this sacrificial act the man and the woman received the garment which covered their nakedness. Abel knew, undoubtedly, the meaning of it, and therefore "he offered unto God a more excellent sacrifice than Cain, by which he obtained witness that he was righteous, God testifying of his gifts, and by it he being dead yet speaketh" (Hebrews xii:24), for Abel died for his brother's sin. To follow this great line of salvation-revelation in every detail would fill a volume itself. We but trace the strong and outstanding marks of it.

Immediately after Abraham had believed, this belief being counted to him for righteousness, the father of the faithful brought sacrifices which were commanded by God: an heifer, a goat, a ram, a

turtle-dove and a pigeon. Later in the sacrificial code of Israel these sacrifices became very prominent, not only for the present need of His chosen people, but also as prophetic types of one great consummating sacrifice not brought by God's people but by the Lord Himself. Isaac is the seed promised to Abraham; he foreshadows another, even Him who is the seed of the woman. Was it only as a test that Abraham was commanded "Take now thy son, thine only son Isaac, whom thou lovest, and get thee into the land of Moriah, and offer him there for a burnt offering" (Genesis xxii:1-2)? It was a test, but also a prophetic picture of the greatest event of human history.

Israel is in Egypt. A night of death and judgment comes for that land. His people must be sheltered and delivered. They are commanded to take lambs. The head of a house follows the divine directions and chooses a lamb without blemish. But it is not sufficient to take this lamb in its perfect condition and present it when the angel of death goes from house to house. It has to be slain and the blood has to be put on the lintel and the two side posts of their dwellings. Jehovah said, "I am Jehovah. And the blood shall be for you a token upon the houses where you are, and when I see the blood, I will pass over you" (Exodus xii:13).

The blood-delivered people received directions through Moses to build a place for worship, constructed after a heavenly pattern. How insignificant that tabernacle was in comparison with the great and magnificent temples of Egypt and other nations who erected then their religious edifices! A priesthood was instituted. In that place of worship Jehovah was visibly present in a symbol of

His own holy and unapproachable character. The approach into His presence was only possible by blood. Offerings and sacrifices were brought continually, year in and year out, not at certain times only, but daily. In that worship blood was the leading thing. All was dedicated and all was worship by blood, and blood alone. "For when Moses had spoken every precept to all the people according to the law, he took the blood of calves and goats, with water and scarlet wool, and hyssop, and sprinkled both the book, and all the people, Saying, This is the blood of the testament which God hath enjoined unto you. Moreover he sprinkled with blood both the tabernacle, and all the vessels of the ministry. And almost all things are by the law purged with blood, and without the shedding of blood there is no remission" (Hebrews ix:19-22).

Once a year the God-appointed high priest went into the holiest, "not without blood, which he offered for himself, and the errors of the people" (Hebrews ix:7). The whole Levitical institution, the tabernacle, its altars and furniture, the different sacrifices, the offerings, and everything else down to its minutest details, foreshadows the great redemption to come, and contains a marvelous wisdom, which, under the enlightening influence of the Spirit of God, shows forth redemption in its different phases. To say, as is said, that these institutions and ceremonies were copied from Babylonish worship and introduced into Israel after the exile is historically untrue.

But all these sacrifices, the lambs, bulls and goats with all their blood could not give rest and peace, nor could they take away sins. They were but shadows. "For the law having a shadow of good

things to come, and not the very image of the things, can never with those sacrifices which they offered year by year continually make the comers thereunto perfect. For then would they not have ceased to be offered? because that the worshipers once purged should have had no more conscience of sins. For in those sacrifices there is a remembrance made again of sins every year. For it is not possible that the blood of bulls and of goats should take away sins" (Hebrews x:1-4). But why were they instituted, if the blood of those sacrifices could not take away sins? They were for the believing Israelite the objects of faith. He looked to the future for a fulfilment of what those sacrifices foreshadowed. They were "the shadow," and only the shadow "of good things to come."

So it is with the serpent of brass. One look to the serpent on a pole was sufficient to give life to the dying Israelites (Numbers xxi). All this and much more is prophetic of the Redeemer's great work. But there are also direct prophecies. Such we find in the Psalms and in the prophetic Books.

These prophecies cannot be interpreted as referring to "certain unknown individuals," nor can they point towards the experiences of the writers, such as King David. Much less can they be explained by the nation Israel. They speak of a *Holy One*. It is true that Israel in certain passages is spoken of as the Servant of Jehovah, called to serve, and ultimately becoming that, which Israel has never yet been. But the Servant of Jehovah, so wonderfully revealed in Isaiah xlii:liii, is a Person; that Person is Jehovah Himself manifested in the flesh, the Immanuel. He, by His work, is the Redeemer of Israel. That Servant is the God of Israel. "Israel

shall be saved in Jehovah with an everlasting salvation" (Isaiah xlv:17). "There is no God else beside Me; a just God and a Saviour; there is none beside Me. Look unto Me, and be ye saved, all the ends of the earth, for I am God and there is none else" (Isaiah xvl:21, 22). Let some Modernist or Jewish Rabbi explain Isaiah xlix:5-12 as meaning nothing but the nation! It is the story of Jehovah, the Saviour, Jehoshuah. He is seen formed from the womb (His Virgin-birth). His work with Israel is not successful. They despise Him. But the Gentiles receive the light, and "by the fall of Israel salvation comes," through Him, "to the Gentiles" (Romans xi:11). The despised One has a glorious reward. They come from everywhere to worship Him, while He delivers those who sit in darkness. It is not Israel, but Jehovah, as Servant, who tells out His suffering when we read: "I gave My back to the smiters, and My cheeks to them that plucked off the hair; I hid not my face from shame and spitting" (Isaiah 1:6).

Then follows in Isaiah that matchless chapter which shows the Servant despised and rejected of men, stricken and afflicted; yea, bruised by Him who sent Him. He suffers not for His sins; He could not suffer for His iniquities, for He is the Holy One. But He suffers for others. He is wounded for transgressions; He is bruised for iniquities, not His own; iniquity is laid upon Him; His stripes bring healing; His holy soul was made an offering for sin. And as a result of this substitutionary suffering, this Servant of Jehovah in whose mouth there was no deceit,[5] who had done no violence,

[5]Ho, all ye Modernists, please apply this for us to the nation Israel!

receives glory. By His knowledge the righteous Servant, because He bore the iniquities of others, shall justify many. He is to have a seed and shall see the travail of His soul. This glorious chapter ends with three great statements: He was numbered with the transgressor; He bore the sins of many; He made intercession for the transgressors.

This great prophecy of the suffering of the Holy One of Israel, who is Jehovah, by whom and for whom all things were created, who, according to prophecy, was to come to this earth in the form of man, clothed with a human body, which was formed by the Spirit of God, is the great and unshakable revelation of the redemption work which man needs in order to be "just with God," the work which alone can bring man back to God.

Without touching upon other prophecies[6] let us turn at once to the Work of Christ. The great redemption work foreshadowed and predicted in the Old Testament was fulfilled by Him. The work which brings man back to God is *the work of the Cross* and not the work of His character and holy life. His death, sacrificial and not as a martyr, reveals God's plan and God's terms of redemption, and also makes known the wisdom of God, as to how He can be a *Just God* and a *Saviour*. The reconciliation was effected by the death of the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ. Peace was made in the Blood of the Cross. The unbridgeable chasm between a holy God, a God of Light, and unholy man in the darkness of sin, which human religions tried unsuccessfully to span, is bridged. God Him-

[6]We quote some of the other outstanding prophecies which also predict the Messiah. Psalms xxii, lxix, cix; Micah v:1; Zechariah ix:9-11; xi:12-13; xiii:7; and many others; including Jonah and his typical experience.

self put across that great chasm the Cross of His Son. This is the only way open for lost man. The Cross is the meeting place of a holy, righteous God and the lost sinner; and there, yes, there *alone* God can kiss lost man, press him to His bosom, and lift him out of his guilty distance into the eternal sunshine of His Father love. There, yes there *alone*, is found hope for the hopeless, help for the helpless, peace for the restless, unspeakable joy for the joyless, and perfect justification for the condemned. But let us draw nearer.

He who is from above and not of this world came to do this. Frequently He spoke of an hour for which He had come from above. "Mine hour is not yet come." And when this hour looms up, when the shadow of the cross falls across His human path, we hear Him say "Now is My soul troubled; and what shall I say? Father save Me from this hour: but for this cause came I unto this hour" (John xii:27). That hour was appointed by God in His omniscience before the foundation of the world, for the Cross was with God not an afterthought but His forethought. "Wherefore when coming into the world, He saith, Sacrifice and offering Thou wouldest not, but a body hast Thou prepared Me (His Virgin-birth). In burnt offerings and sacrifices for sin hast Thou had no pleasure. Then I said, Lo, I come (in the volume of the book it is written of Me) to do Thy will, O God" (Hebrews x:5-7). The eternal salvation will of God is accomplished in the Cross. To that Cross every sacrifice in the Jewish dispensation points, as well as the sprinkled blood and the ministration of the high priest. John, the forerunner, knew all this, for he bore witness of Him and His work when he said: "Behold the Lamb of

God, which taketh away the sin of the world" (John i:29).

In this great redemption work we are face to face with the supernatural. No finite mind can comprehend the full meaning of the sufferings of the Holy One, through which He passed from Gethsemane to Calvary, where He bowed His blessed thorn-crowned head and uttered the glorious victor's shout, "It is finished!" In the sentence pronounced upon man after his fall (Genesis iii:16-19) four words are mentioned: sweat, thorns, sorrow and the dust of death. He who came to be the second man, the Lord from heaven, in the agony of His holy soul passed through such deep sorrow that "His sweat was as it were great drops of blood" (Luke xxii:44). What awful physical pain followed! Mocked and crowned with a crown of thorns which was put upon His holy head, the outward symbol of the curse of sin, He was reviled and passed through all the suffering of which the Prophets and the Psalms had spoken. Unjustly condemned, He was put to death and nailed to a cross of shame. He suffered in Himself; He suffered from cruel men, energized by the power of darkness.

However, nothing supernatural is connected with these sufferings, the crowning with thorns, the cruel scourging, the smiting of the face, the marring of the visage, the spitting, the nailing to the cross, and the mockery and ridicule heaped upon Him. If this were all that was needed to bring man back to God, to procure redemption to the uttermost and give the guilty conscience rest and peace, we might well hesitate and question. The mystery is deeper than the physical sufferings through which He passed in our behalf. The heart of the sacrificial death of the

Son of God must be sought not in His own suffering, and suffering from men alone, but in His suffering from the side of God Himself, whose righteousness and holiness He shared, whose righteousness and holiness He only could meet and satisfy. What that meant is known to God alone. We can repeat the deep sayings of the Scriptures without being able to fathom that which is supernatural. It was God who dealt with Him as the substitute of sinners. "*God made Him sin for us, who knew no sin; that we might be made the righteousness of God in Him*" (2 Corinthians ii:21). He was made a curse for us (Galatians iii:13). God alone could make Him a curse for us; God alone could make Him sin for us. What happened in those three mysterious hours, when the Cross and the Lord of Life were enshrouded in darkness, when He tasted death, deeper death than physical death, when His soul was made an offering for sin, can never be discovered.

"*My God, My God, why hast Thou forsaken Me?* (Psalm xxii:1; Matthew xxvii:46). Our pen rests. We stop and worship.

It was then that He drank the cup filled with all that we deserve. It was then that He paid the price of our redemption.

"Christ died for our sins according to the Scriptures." If He died for anything else, for anything less than that, then His death is more than an unexplainable act; it is the greatest injustice which ever happened, and if so, we would have to lift our mortal hand to heaven and charge the Throne of Righteousness with this unjust act.

According to divine revelation death is in the world on account of sin. "The soul that sinneth it shall die." Man dies, because the wages of sin is death.

This harmonizes with the righteousness of God. But here is One who never sinned. Has death a claim on such a One? We answer "NO!" And He testified to this fact, that His life could not be taken from Him. All attempts to kill Him were futile. Several times the Jews tried to stone Him. No stone could strike Him, neither could they cast Him down from a precipice, nor could the ship which filled with water sink. We speak of man as being "Mortal"; was He mortal as other men are mortal? Then if He died as other men die, if He died for the principles He advocated, or as a martyr, or as an example, He too was a sinner and could not be the Saviour. If Christ did not die for our sins, then we are plunged back into hopelessness. Man must continue his endless and despairing search for righteousness and peace, and close his eyes to enter eternity without an assuring hope.

But Christ died for our sins. The Rock of Ages, the Rock of Salvation, the Rock of Eternity, stands and will ever stand. Let them blast at this Rock. Let them try to dislodge the Stone of Israel, the cornerstone upon which all rests. That Stone will some day smite and grind His enemies to powder. (Daniel ii:34; Matthew xxi:44).

And is it true that the Cross and its work has made peace and brings lost man back home to God, as a forgiven sinner, to be now a beloved child? Millions living in different continents give the answer. And from above millions more shout their "Hallelujah" as an answer. They all believed and still believe the fact of John iii:16: "For God so loved the world, that He gave His only begotten Son, that whosoever believeth on Him should not perish, but have everlasting life."

IV. His Supernatural Survival. The Lord Jesus Christ died on the Cross. His death was not a gradual ebbing away of life; there was no physical exhaustion. No physically exhausted man can cry with a loud voice as He did. "Jesus, when He had cried again with a loud voice, yielded up the spirit" (Matthew xxvii:50). It was the victor's cry, the shout of triumph. He who had said that He would give His life, gave it on the cross. There was at once a supernatural answer attesting the value and the power of His redemption work. It was the heavenly "Amen" to His great utterance "It is finished"! "And, behold, the veil of the temple was rent in twain from the top to the bottom; and the earth did quake, and the rocks rent" (Matthew xxvii:51). An unseen hand from above tore the heavy veil, which hung before the sacred part of the place of worship, the place into which the high priest every year entered with the sacrificial blood. And now there is no more need to part that veil once a year; another, a permanent way has been made, by which at all times the sinner can draw near unto God and face Him in His Holiness. A better blood has been shed; a better priest has made possible the access into the presence of God.

In addressing his Hebrew Christian brethren the writer of the Epistle to the Hebrews says: "Having therefore, brethren, boldness to enter into the holiest by the Blood of Jesus, by a new and living way, which He hath consecrated for us, through the veil, that is to say, His flesh; and having a high priest over the house of God; let us draw near with a true heart in full assurance of faith. . . ." (Hebrews x:19-22). All sacrifices of animals are now forever ended, nor is there a priest needed with

his earthly ministrations. The Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, is both the sacrifice and the priest. The quaking earth and the rent rocks bore another supernatural testimony that Creation's Lord had become Creation's Redeemer. The Roman Centurion with his men who were witnesses of all, were deeply convicted, and these pagans testified, "Truly this was the Son of God!"

He had died. There could be no mistake about it. A rationalistic theory, which is still held by some, claims that He had not actually died; He had only collapsed, but the invention is so ridiculous that it needs no further comment. His side had been pierced and blood and water had gushed forth, the evidences of His real death, as well as the redeeming and cleansing power of His work.

He was buried; the Lord of Creation who rested on the seventh day when Creation had been finished, rests again on the seventh day in a tomb; His work is finished.

Could He rest there forever? Could His body share the fate of other human bodies? Can it be true of Him also, "Dust to dust and ashes to ashes"? Did that tomb, that new sepulchre, that rock hewn tomb, where He was laid in fulfilment of prophecy (Isaiah liii:9) remain sealed with the Roman seal and remain unopened?

Modernism answers with a bold, Yes. It is the answer which infidelity has always given. If it is the right answer, then that unopened tomb in which the body of the Lord Jesus was laid to see corruption would be the grave of all our hopes.

What would it mean? It would mean that He was not the Son of God; that the words He spoke, "I am from above; I am not of this world," are

not true, that all His testimony concerning Himself must be dismissed as self-deception. It would mean that He is not the Virgin-born Son of God, and that therefore He must have been a sinner, who shared the common fate of the race when His body saw corruption. It would mean that all His sufferings cannot redeem man, for if His body remained in the grave, the death He died has no more meaning than the death of any other human being. It would mean that the wonderful revelation as to man's redemption, made known throughout the Old Testament, is a concoction of falsehood. Thus the foundation upon which Christianity rests would fall to pieces, and Christianity instead of being the highest revelation, would be nothing but a religious imposture. If this were true, then the race would be plunged into a night of endless despair and hopelessness.

But why should we write all this in our own words, when weightier words than ours are written in the New Testament?

"*Now if Christ be preached that He rose from among the dead, how say some among you that there is no resurrection of the dead? But if there be no resurrection of the dead, then is Christ not risen; and if Christ be not risen, then is our preaching in vain* (Modernists, take notice!), *and your faith is also vain. Yea, and we are found false witnesses of God, because we have testified of God that He raised up Christ, whom He raised not up, if so be that the dead rise not. For if the dead rise not, then Christ is not raised. And if Christ be not raised, your faith is vain; ye are yet in your sins. Then they also which are fallen asleep in Christ are perished. If in this life only we have hope in Christ, we are of all men*

most miserable" (1 Corinthians xv:12-19). This is the divine, unanswerable logic.

And triumphantly the Spirit of God adds: "*But now is Christ risen from among the dead.*"

It is true that the Modernist uses the word "resurrection"! Yet he speaks of the resurrection of Christ in a far different way than Scripture speaks of it. He tells us that it is a "*spiritual*" resurrection. Christ lives by His words, by His example, and by His spirit. So the Modernist constantly speaks of the "Christ-spirit." Pardon, ye great scholars, but a "spiritual resurrection of Christ" is sheer nonsense!

The New Testament does not teach such a spiritual resurrection, but a physical resurrection. This physical resurrection of Christ is the cornerstone upon which hope and assurance rest. It is also claimed that the literal resurrection is undemonstrated; it is called unscientific. Science searches for facts; if reasonable facts are found, a theory is no longer a theory, but truth. The physical resurrection of Christ is not an unproved theory, but it is truth, for it is proved by indisputable facts. Trustworthy documents, which no real scholarship has ever been able to impeach, give us these facts. The Gospel records contain them. Critics point to contradictions in the different accounts of the resurrection of Christ; the claim is made that they cannot be harmonized. Under the careful and spiritual search of the Christian who approaches these records not with doubt but with confidence, these seeming discrepancies become evidences of divine inspiration. If the writers of the Gospels had been impostors they would have taken care to avoid what might appear a "flaw" in their testimony; they

would have made their accounts harmonious, so as to cover up their fraud.

The fact remains that the tomb was empty; the body had disappeared. What became of the body of Jesus? How strange it is that the disciples who had heard Him speak so often of "rising from the dead on the third day" should have forgotten all about it. It was ordered thus. But His enemies had not forgotten His sayings. They were familiar with them. The day after Christ had died the chief priests and the Pharisees went before Pilate. "Sir," said they to the Roman Governor, "we remember that that deceiver said, while he was yet alive, after three days I will rise again. Command therefore that the sepulchre be made sure until the third day, lest his disciples come by night, and steal him away, and say unto the people, He is risen from the dead: so the last error shall be worse than the first" (Matthew xxvii:63-64). Pilate had no love for the Jews; he hated them as only a Roman could hate. He was a politician. And so he consented: "Ye have your watch; go your way, make it as sure as ye can." Was it sneer, or was it fear that the Man he had condemned, of whose guiltlessness he was convinced, might rise again?

An immense stone is put before the sepulchre; the sacred seal of Rome is placed upon it. A strong Roman watch is set.

The next day the Roman watch rushes back to the city, frightened to death. There has been an earthquake. A supernatural being, with a shining countenance like lightning, with raiment white as snow, has suddenly appeared. The stone is rolled away and the sacred seal has been broken. Then the women, who have gone to the sepulchre never

expecting to find an empty tomb, hear the great news, "He is not here, for He is risen." After a while they see the Risen One. His disciples, reluctant to believe, come and see the empty sepulchre. The watch, having recovered, does not go to Pilate to report what they have experienced. They make their report to the chief priests. A hasty council meeting is summoned. What is to be done? A Jewish trait comes to the foreground. Money is going to fix this matter. So they give large money unto the soldiers on the condition that they say, "His disciples came by night, and stole him, while we slept." What about the Governor? "We will attend to him," the chief priests assure the soldiers, "We will see to it that you will escape punishment." "So they took the money and did as they were taught" (Matthew xxviii). This fabrication, next to the assertion that Christ had not actually died, has been the stock in trade of infidels down to our own times.

How can any sane man believe this? How could the watch know while they slept what was going on around them? How is it that the *whole* watch slept and committed an offense which Rome often punished with death? Their sleep was so sound that they did not hear the approaching disciples. How soundly they slept when that heavy stone was rolled away, that not one of them awoke to give the alarm! And when the disciples, carrying the lifeless body of Christ, stepped across the sleeping soldiers, not one of them was disturbed. After all, the frightened, scattered, cowardly disciples were not cowards at all. They were mighty, courageous men. They risked their lives in stealing the body. Believe it if you can!

"He showed Himself alive after His passion by many infallible proofs, being seen of His disciples for forty days." Thus writes Luke, the beloved physician (Acts i:3). Paul writes, "He was seen of Cephas, then of the twelve; after that, He was seen of above five hundred brethren at once; of whom the greater part remain unto this present, but some are fallen asleep. After that He was seen of James; then of all the Apostles" (1 Corinthians xv:5-7). If five hundred men said they saw one alive who had died on a cross, and their witness is falsehood, what was their motive? Did they earn glory and earthly advantages by inventing a lie? What consciences these impostors must have had, that some of them died without making a clean breast of this colossal fraud, stating that they had seen one alive whose body was still in the grave.

But is not Paul's list of witnesses not incomplete? He forgot to mention the women. He was badly informed, some say. But the reason is a different one. The power which moved his pen restrained him from mentioning the women, for the reason that the Spirit of God knew that infidels in later times would charge the women with being hysterical and with having invented the resurrection story. So Paul is constrained to omit the testimony of the women, to show that their testimony can be dispensed with and that there are enough other witnesses to prove His physical resurrection.

But there is still another witness, Paul the great Apostle himself. "And last of all He was seen of me also, as of one born out of due time" (1 Corinthians xv:8). He mentions himself last, though his testimony is not by any means the least. The famous Saul of Tarsus, the Pharisee, the son of a Pharisee,

the proud religionist, the learned man and Roman citizen, had persecuted the Church. He hated the name of Christ. His mission was never realized. Instead of denouncing Christ he arose in a synagogue and preached that Christ Jesus is the Son of God. He went from synagogue to synagogue to give the same testimony. No wonder that everyone who heard him was amazed and said, "Is not this he that destroyed them which called on this Name in Jerusalem, and came hither for that intent, that he might bring them bound unto the chief priests?" (Acts ix:21).

How did this sudden conversion come about? Was it natural or supernatural? What efforts have been made to explain it in a natural way! Infidels and rationalists have surmised that it may have been a lightning stroke; others invented a theory that Paul suffered from epilepsy, which the Greeks called a holy disease. But the after life of this man cannot be explained by a thunderstorm, nor by an epileptic fit. How he suffered! What tortures and privations he endured on account of his unflinching testimony! And finally his faith and testimony resulted in the martyr's death. There is no explanation of his conversion apart from the account which he gives himself. On the road to Damascus he had seen the risen Son of God in the glory light above; he heard His voice. He learned then that the Crucified One lives, that He is the Christ, the Son of God. Because of this supernatural experience Paul included himself in the list of witnesses of the physical resurrection of Christ.

Two more evidences of His physical resurrection are of importance. The first is the worshipping true Church on earth. How did this body, unknown in

the Old Testament, come into existence? The Church of Jesus Christ, a universal body, composed of Jews and Gentiles of every continent, worships, not on the Jewish Sabbath, but on the first day of the week. The true Church commemorates on that day the fact that Christ died and rose again. The Church is founded on the Rock of the Risen Christ, the Son of God. He said, "Upon this rock I will build My Church, and the gates of Hades shall not prevail against it" (Matthew xvi:18). History proves the truth of this promise. The Church will always worship thus; no infidelity and no Modernism can stop this worship. So will all future history make good the statement of the Christ of God, that His Church can never be defeated. It is impossible that this worship was started and maintained for nearly two thousand years without the reality of the fact upon which it rests. The existence of the true Church on earth, that organism of which Christ risen from the dead is the head, witnesses to His physical resurrection.

The second witness is the individual true believer and his experience. The true believer knows Christ in an experimental way. He has found in Him a Saviour. He has tested His promise to give rest to those who come unto Him. He came to Him with a sin-burdened conscience, and, believing on Him, as the sin-bearer, the believer has been justified and given peace with God. He has believed on the Son of God risen from the dead and has received a new nature and in it eternal life. He has fellowship with Him, whom he knows as a friend. He prays to Him, seeks help and counsel from Him. He knows that He is the ever-living high priest, and comes to the throne of grace to find help in

time of need. He experiences His power in the conflict below; He receives from Him comfort and peace in sorrow and affliction. The believer's life and experience is a witness that Christ is risen and lives at the right hand of God.

Such are the indisputable evidences of His physical resurrection. Tell us, ye deniers of His literal resurrection, where is Christ today? Is He the glorified Man at the right hand of the Father? Is He for you the ever living priest and advocate? Can you pray to Him with confidence? If He is not risen from the dead, how could He have ascended? If He did not ascend, how can He be present with God, appearing there in our behalf? And if He is non-existent as the First Begotten from the dead, how can He be, as the New Testament teaches, the Head of the new Creation and the Lord of all?

The denial of His supernatural survival, His physical resurrection, means the total destruction of the Christian faith and the faith of a Christian.

V. The Supernatural Message. The supernatural facts we have briefly unfolded demand a supernatural message to the human race. It must be a message which is found nowhere else, far above any message of the world-religions, a message which is from above and not of this earth. Such a message is not contained in the Synoptics, which record the sayings, the teachings, and the parables of the Lord Jesus Christ. Here is one of the errors of Christendom. Many think, for instance, that the Sermon on the Mount contains this message. The "golden rule" is described as a message, and that Christ in giving this rule showed the way for the betterment of the race. It is also pointed out by the enemies

of supernatural Christianity that Buddhism contains similar sayings, that Buddha Gautama taught at least some of the same truths which Christ taught, and that, inasmuch as Buddhism antedates Christianity, Christ and His followers must have copied from this system. This assertion is groundless, for it has been proved conclusively that some of the supposed sayings of Buddha were copied from the Gospels and are not original.

"It is in accordance with the very genius of Buddhism to borrow. It has absorbed every indigenous superstition and entered into partnership with every local religious system, from the Devil worship of Burma and Ceylon to the Taouism of China and Shinto of Japan. In its long continued contact with Christianity it has changed from the original atheism of Gautama to various forms of theism, and in some of its sects at least, from a staunch insistence on self-help alone to an out and out doctrine of salvation by faith. This is true of the Shin and Yodo sects of Japan. From recognizing no God at all at first, Buddhism had, by the seventh century A. D., a veritable trinity, with attributes resembling those of the Triune God of Christianity, and by the tenth century it had five trinities with one supreme Adi-Buddha over them all. Every one may judge for himself whether these later interpolations of the system were borrowed from the New Testament Trinity, which had been proclaimed throughout the East ten centuries before."[7]

Modern Buddhism claims to go back to the original teachings of Buddha Gautama. One Buddhist authority makes the following declaration: "Buddhists teach the reign of perfect goodness and wis-

[7]"Oriental Religions and Christianity," p. 167.

dom without a personal god, continuance of individuality without an immortal soul, eternal happiness without a local heaven, the way of salvation without a vicarious saviour, redemption worked out by each one himself without any prayers, sacrifices and penances, without the ministry of ordained priests, without the intercession of saints, without divine mercy. These and many others which have become the fundamental doctrines of the Buddhist religion, were recognized by the Buddha in the night of his enlightenment under the Boddhi-tree."[8]

The Modernist who has accepted this theory, that some of the sayings of Christ in the Gospel are of Buddhist origin, should listen to one of his own brethren. Professor Kuenen who had no use for supernatural Christianity, wrote, "I think we may safely affirm that we must abstain from assigning to Buddhism the smallest direct influence on the origin of Christianity."

The teachings of Christ given in the Synoptics transcend the precepts of all religious leaders of the past. Yet, while it is true that we do not find in them the great, supernatural message of Christianity, we discover under careful study that this message is anticipated. It is different with the fourth Gospel, written by the Apostle John. Here we have teachings of Christ which are vastly different from the words of Christ reported by Matthew, Mark and Luke. We cannot enter into all the reasons why the beloved disciple wrote this Gospel about forty years after the Synoptics had been written and widely circulated. We state but one. During those forty years strange and erroneous teachings as to the Person and Work of Christ were

[8]Buddhist Catechism, by Subhadra.

advanced, and began to trouble the Church. The system which later wrought such havoc, Gnosticism, was started in that period; as well as others which have been revived in certain movements in the modern world. It was then that the Spirit of God moved the aged John to record the words of Christ which silence all these errors. The authenticity of the fourth Gospel has been questioned; it has been assigned to the middle or end of the second century. If the Apostle John did not write this Gospel, will some critical scholar tell us who wrote it? The evidence is overwhelmingly on the side of the Johannine authorship.

Here, then, we find the words of Christ which contain the foundation of the great supernatural message which Christianity brings to man. Peter voices the testimony of the whole Church when he says: "Lord, to whom shall we go? Thou hast the words of eternal life. And we believe and are sure that Thou art that Christ, the Son of the living God" (John vi:68-69). Two facts must here be remembered. The first is that all the teachings the Lord gives in the fourth Gospel as to eternal life, the free gift of it, and all that goes with it, are spoken in anticipation of His sacrificial death and His physical resurrection. The second, that it was not yet the full, the complete supernatural message. This we learn from His own words to the disciples. "I have yet *many things* to say unto you, but ye cannot bear them now. Howbeit, when He, the Spirit of Truth, is come, He will guide you into all truth: for He shall not speak of Himself; but whatsoever He shall hear, that shall He speak: and He will show you things to come. He shall glorify Me, for He shall receive of Mine, and shall show it

unto you" (John xvi:12-14). He said, "I am the Truth"; He also spoke of the Word as being Truth; but here He speaks of the "Spirit of Truth," that is, the Holy Spirit of God. In time he would make known the many things which the Lord Jesus did not fully reveal to His own.

But the Spirit of Truth did not come as the final great revealer till the Lord Jesus had died, had risen from the dead, and had gone back to the Father (John vii:38-39). His coming and His revelation to give the full, supernatural message of Christianity was dependent on the great sacrificial work of the Son of God, and on His glorification. We must turn to the Epistles, those great and inexhaustible documents of Christianity, to find the consummating, glorious and supernatural message. It was given after Christ finished the work He came to do, and after the Holy Spirit came to earth.

God can now, after His Son has met His own righteousness and satisfied it, open the floodgates of His Love, and pour forth the riches of His Grace in Christ Jesus, more fathomless than the sea. Now are made known the secrets of His loving heart, which in former ages were unrevealed. Isaiah wrote seven centuries before Christ: "For since the beginning of the world men have not heard, nor perceived by the ear, neither hath the eye seen, O God, beside Thee, what He hath prepared for him that waiteth for Him (Isaiah lxiv:4). The pious, God-fearing Israelite must have understood by these words that God had wonderful riches in store when He (the Messiah) should come, for whom they waited. In the New Testament this passage is quoted. "But as it is written, Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, neither have entered into the heart of man, the

things which God hath prepared for them that love Him. *But God hath revealed them unto us by His Spirit*" (1 Corinthians ii:9-10). As the context shows, it is the hidden wisdom of God ordained before the world unto our glory.

The message is the Gospel of Christ. The word "Gospel" means "good news." In this Gospel is revealed the wisdom and the power of God. The chosen instrument to make this supernatural message known, to unfold it in all its simplicity and in all its glory is the Apostle Paul. He did not originate this great message; nor did he receive it from some other Apostle. Rather was it given to him *by revelation*. "But I certify you, brethren, that the Gospel which was preached of me is not after man. For I neither received it of man, neither was I taught it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ" (Galatians i:11, 12).

The cry has been raised, "Back to Christ." It sounds well, but it bodes ill. Paraphrased, it has this in it, "Back to Christ, and *away from Paul*." Paul is charged with having, with his master mind, formulated a system of theology and eschatology. He is charged with having put together this Gospel and plan of salvation, making it rest entirely on the vicarious suffering of Christ, His resurrection, literal ascension, and literal return. It is said that the teachings of Christ in the Sermon on the Mount and His other ethical teachings have in them nothing of the doctrines of the Apostle. Paul conceived them all and promulgated them as his views. And so the cry is raised, "Back to the original teachings of Christ, to His philosophy of life; the Christ-spirit is what we need." Then all kinds of erroneous statements are made, such as the teachings of the

Fatherhood of God and the brotherhood of man, and it is claimed that Christ taught these things. Even Socialism is defended by the teachings of Christ.

But Paul assures us that the Gospel he preached and taught was given him by the revelation of Jesus Christ. That Gospel is in itself the evidence that it is supernatural and not invented by the human brain. It is this Gospel which has the stamp of supernaturalism.

What a message of grace and glory it is! So simple that the child can grasp it; so deep that no saint has ever fathomed its depths. It is the message of the Love of God. In this message, "God commendeth His love toward us, in that, while we were yet sinners, Christ died for us" (Romans v:8). This is the great expression of the Love of God. "In this was manifested the love of God toward us, because that God sent His only begotten Son into the world, that we might live through Him. Herein is love, not that we loved God, but that God loved us, and sent His Son to be the propitiation for our sins" (1 John iv:9, 10). Apart from this, knowledge of the love of God and the God of Love is impossible.

In the Epistle to the Romans, in which the great man of God unfolds the Gospel of the salvation of God, the Spirit of God through him gives first a picture of the desperate condition in which the whole race, Jew and Gentile, is found. All are guilty before God. All are lost; the Jew with his unkept law, the Gentile without a law. Paul describes the degradation of the race. Man is found in a horrible pit of darkness and filth. There is no way out. Man has no strength to save himself. All the efforts he makes to leave the pit are unavailing. If he is to be saved, God must save him.

God reached down into this pit; His hand in salvation is His Son, the Lord Jesus Christ. What He has done, His blessed suffering and death on the Cross, enables God, in His righteousness, to save man in a righteous way. God maintains His righteousness and is just, and the justifier of him which believes in Jesus. Laying hold on the pierced hand of Christ, the helpless sinner is lifted out of the pit. He is declared justified, acquitted, for his guilt has been righteously met. He has peace with God, not through his own works, but through the work of another, even Christ. He is accepted, and the very love of God is shed abroad in his heart. He is no longer linked to the first man, from whom he received a nature of sin, but he is now in Christ the second man, whose righteousness, life and glory he shares (Romans v:12-21). Life and power are bestowed, that he can live in righteousness and holiness. The filthy garments of unrighteousness and sin are gone, and the garment of righteousness, provided by God in Christ, typified by God's act in Eden, covers now the forgiven sinner. Sin has no more power and dominion over the saved believer; he needs no longer to serve sin, but can yield his members in a life of righteousness unto God.

The way of salvation in Christ leads still higher in this Epistle. The summit is reached in the eighth chapter. It begins with the assurance that there is no more condemnation to those who have accepted the message and are found covered by the work of Christ and identified with Him; it ends with the assurance of no separation, in time and in eternity, from the Love of God, which is in Christ Jesus, our Lord. On this great peak the sonship of the forgiven sinner is declared, "And if children

then heirs, heirs of God and joint heirs with Jesus Christ." A forgiven past, a triumphant present, and a glorious, never-ending future! Justified and glorified! Then Paul utters his great, inspired shout, a shout in which all blood-washed sinners can join.

"What shall we then say to these things? If God be for us, who can be against us? He that spared not His own Son, but delivered Him up for us all, how shall He not with Him also freely give us all things? Who shall lay anything to the charge of God's elect? It is God that justifieth. Who is he that condemneth? It is Christ that died, yea rather, that is risen again, who is even at the right hand of God, who also maketh intercession for us" (Romans viii:31-34).

All things in Christ and with Christ! Here is where the finite mind must halt; not even the boldest faith can imagine what it all means and includes. The Christ who died as the substitute of sinners, who arose from the dead, is now, as the glorified Man, at the right hand of God, crowned with glory and honor. "God raised Him from the dead and gave Him glory" (1 Peter i:21). He who had become man and glorified God in a holy life on earth, and more so in His sacrificial death, had to be rewarded. This is the demand of God's righteousness. While the Lord Jesus Christ, as very God, shares all the glory of the Godhead, as the incarnate Son of God He acquired glory. Of this acquired glory He spoke in prayer, that these for whom He died might be sharers of it. "The glory Thou hast given Me I have given them" (John xvii:21). He bestows upon believers His own glory. Blessed truth! All we deserve, He met it all; all He deserves He gives to those for whom He died.

The message tells us that all who accept Christ as their Saviour receive His glory and acquired riches as God's own heir. "For ye know the grace of our Lord Jesus Christ, that, though He was rich, yet for your sakes He became poor, that ye through His poverty might be rich" (2 Corinthians viii:9). What riches, then, are these which are given to those who trust in Him? They are the unsearchable riches of Christ which His love, the love that passeth knowledge, has put on the side of those who have accepted Him. The message unfolds these riches of Christ. It tells us that the ultimate goal of redemption is that the believer is to be like the risen Christ, conformed to His image, that He might be the firstborn of many brethren (Romans viii:29). To each member of the race who has become by faith identified with Him is promised the redemption of the body, that the present body, subject to disease, pain and death, on account of sin, shall in the future be changed and be fashioned like unto His own glorious body (Philippians iii:21). John, the beloved disciple, tells us that we are the children of God, and that it has not yet appeared what we shall be. He adds triumphantly: "But we know that, when He shall appear, we shall be like Him, for we shall see Him as He is" (1 John iii:2). In other words, the message declares that what the risen Christ is in glory that every true believer is to be. The day will come when He, the Lord of all, will bring many sons unto glory. Then the fulness of glory will be manifested, when all who accepted His redemption will possess with Him, as joint heirs, all things, and enjoy His eternal fellowship in never-ending glory in the Father's house, which His mighty work has prepared for the recep-

tion of those who were once the enemies of God by wicked works.

But even with these wonderful facts before us, of God's offer in this message of the Gospel and His promises for eternity, we are only able to spell out its A-B-C. We but know in part. To know the supernatural message in all its meaning we must wait till the day comes, when we shall no longer look into a glass darkly but when "we shall know as we are known."

And all these riches are the riches of grace, of free, unmerited favor. It is not of works, but the gift of God, bestowed without money and without price on all those who believe.

What a glorious message it is! this supernatural message of Christianity. Could there be for man a higher message than this? Could even God do, or give anything better than He has done, than He has given, what He offers now on His own gracious terms? If He should give a million worlds it would not be greater than what He has done. Could He give a greater gift than the unspeakable gift of the Son of His Love? Could He do anything greater than to make Him, who knew no sin, sin for us, and put upon Him our iniquities and our transgressions? Could He do anything greater than He has done in offering to lost man all he needs without money and without price? Could He promise any greater glory to His erstwhile enemies than the glory of sonship, which makes man, redeemed in Christ, the heir of all things? Reverently speaking, God has in this supernatural message revealed such riches of Grace and Glory as He cannot excel.

Indeed Christianity is the highest and most glorious revelation of God in the manifestation of His

Son, the Lord Jesus Christ; it is the highest and most glorious revelation of the salvation of man and his future destiny in Christ.

But unbelief puts another question: Is Christianity the final religion? Rationalism says that it is not. The process of evolution in religious things cannot be permitted to be arrested with Christianity. Such is the proud boast of the proud scholar of the twentieth century. Man is looking for something higher and better. Tell us what will it be? What has the intellect of man to offer in place of supernatural Christianity? Come with me to the dying bed of a lost soul. Life is fast ebbing away. A few hours more and the soul of this man will have left its earthly house and will enter eternity, never to return to this earthly scene. He knows he is a lost sinner. How can he die in peace and face His Maker as a forgiven sinner? He must have a message which will change his dread and fear into joy unspeakable and full of glory! The best the intellectual unbeliever can do is to send for a poor, uneducated Salvation Army man to tell the story of Christ's death for the ungodly, the message of the sacrificial work of Christ which has made peace for him, and to teach the dying sinner to say:

> "Just as I am, without one plea
> But that Thy blood was shed for me,
> And that Thou bid'st me come to Thee;
> Oh Lamb of God, I come, I come!"

This is the great and crowning evidence of the supernaturalness of the true message of Christianity, it saves, it gives peace, it changes the dying groan into a shout of victory. Any other message is powerless. With what confidence the Apostle Paul wrote to Rome: "For I am not ashamed of the Gospel of

Christ; for it is the power of God unto salvation unto every one that believeth; to the Jew first, and also to the Greek" (Romans i:16). Not that he meant he had to apologize for this Gospel. He knew it would not leave him ashamed. If he went to the synagogue and preached it there, it would not leave him ashamed; Jews were saved by hearing and believing this message. If he went to licentious, wicked Corinth, it did not leave him ashamed. It saved the vile Corinthians. If he went among the Barbarians and preached the God-given message, it manifested its power. And as he went to Rome, he knew that in the great world city the Gospel would also be the power of God unto salvation. Thus it has always been, since Christ died and rose again. The true Gospel of Christ has demonstrated itself as the greatest and most victorious power in the world.

The history of Christian Missions gives this great evidence. And if today men go forth into pagan countries with another gospel, the gospel of Modernism, what will be the result? Nothing but defeat, and in the end a shameful confusion. The saddest thing of all is when the representatives of that other gospel make a compromise with Buddhism, Hinduism, speaking of the good which is in these and other religious systems, and then make an attempt at reforming them.

Modernism proposes a Christian religion without a supernatural Christ, without His supernatural redemption work, without His supernatural survival and glorious existence at the right hand of God. In doing this Modernism turns back to the beggarly elements of world religions, and produces another lifeless and powerless system, unable to save

man and to give him comfort, assurance, and peace. There is nothing outside of supernatural Christianity, which in a supernatural message offers free and full salvation to man.

But let Modernism try to invent a "new religion." Christianity remains the highest possible revelation of God, and the Gospel the highest possible supernatural message. Let Modernism try to displace supernatural Christianity. We need not fear for our holy faith. Christianity is unconquerable, it is final and eternal. All its enemies will pass away, but He, who is the author and finisher of faith, remains. He is the eternal Christ.

VI. The Supernatural Power. The supernatural Christ, His great redemption and the redemption message, demand a supernatural power. This power is the Holy Spirit. Without enlarging on the doctrine of the Holy Spirit in both Testaments, we must remember the outstanding fact that this Spirit is not an influence but a divine Person. It is therefore in order to speak of Him as God the Holy Spirit.

The Holy Spirit is prominently and intimately connected with the life and work of the Lord Jesus Christ. He was "conceived by the Holy Spirit"; the Spirit came upon the Virgin Mary of Nazareth. He produced the body which the Holy One received in incarnation. In this way the Lord Jesus received a sinless nature in a sinless human body. Objection is made to this statement on account of Mary; she had a sinful nature. Was not some of this nature communicated to the Lord Jesus? How Roman theologians have met this difficulty by inventing an immaculate conception of Mary is well known. But there is no need for that. He, who took on

this body, is the Holy One. By His own power of holiness He repudiated every taint of sin; no sin was in Him, for the simple reason of His own holiness.

When He entered upon His public ministry as the promised Messiah, when at Jordan He declared by His baptism that He had come to take the sinner's place in death, the Holy Spirit came upon Him in the form of a dove. While He testified, "the Father who dwelleth in Me," it is equally true that the Spirit of God dwelt in Him and that the fulness of the Godhead was thus in Him. What Isaiah had predicted concerning Him was fulfilled, the Spirit of the Lord God was upon Him for the preaching and the work He came to do (Isaiah lxi:1; Luke iv:16-20). He was led by the Spirit (Matthew iv:2). By the Spirit He cast out evil spirits and did other works (Matthew xii:28). And finally by the eternal Spirit He offered Himself without spot to God (Hebrews ix:14).

The same Spirit of life and power who dwelt in Him, by whom He gave commandment to His apostles even after His resurrection, He promised as a free gift to His disciples. He encouraged them to pray for this gift. "If ye then, being evil, know how to give good gifts unto your children; how much more shall your Heavenly Father give the Holy Spirit to them that ask Him?" (Luke xi:13). Immediately before His passion He gave to His eleven disciples still greater promises. He said: "I will not leave you orphans" (John xiv:18). He assured them that He would ask the Father to give them another Comforter, the Spirit of Truth. The word "Comforter" is in the Greek "*Parakletos*," one called along side of another person to help that

person. It is translated in 1 John ii:1 "Advocate." He told them that this Spirit whom the Father would send should be with them, upon them and in them: He would be the indwelling and the abiding Spirit. He also described the work He would do in them and through them. (John xv:26; xvi:7-15). After His resurrection He demonstrated His power as the Lord, the life-giving Spirit, by breathing upon His disciples and by saying, "Receive ye the Holy Spirit" (John xx:22).

All these promises could not be fulfilled till Christ had died and had returned as the Risen One to the Father. Therefore, before leaving them, He commanded them that they should not depart from Jerusalem, but wait there for the promise of the Father (Acts i:4). The promise was fulfilled on the great historic day of Pentecost. The Holy Spirit was then given to the assembled disciples; He came to possess them individually, and He baptized them collectively into a body, which is the Church of Jesus Christ. There is no need to go back to the promise of Christ and ask Him to send His Spirit, for He sent Him. He is the great witness that Christ is at the right hand of God. He bears witness to Christ; He testifies of Him. His testimony to Christ includes all Christ is, all Christ has done, and unfolds every glory of Christ. He dwells in every heart which has accepted Christ and believes the message of the Gospel, so that each becomes the temple of the Holy Spirit (1 Corinthians v:19). He is also dwelling in the true, the invisible Church, for the Church is "the habitation of God through the Spirit" (Ephesians ii:22). This is also a supernatural fact of Christianity.

How does the Holy Spirit display His supernat-

ural power in and through believers in the Lord Jesus Christ? He is the great agent in the new birth. The Lord taught that man by nature is dead; without spiritual life, he is spiritually dead (John v:25). In order to live for God man needs first of all the gift of life. The Lord selected Nicodemus to teach the necessity of the reception of life in a new birth. Nicodemus was a fine specimen of a religious man, for he was a Pharisee; he was a fine moral man, for he held a position as ruler; and he was a well educated man, for he was the teacher in Israel. Yet in spite of his religiousness, his morality and his education, he was spiritually dead and was not fit to be in the kingdom of God. Therefore the Lord told him, "Ye must be born again" (John iii:3). The Lord emphasized the absolute necessity of a new birth, a birth from above. He spoke of the Spirit as the power of the new birth—"born of the Spirit," and "what is born of the Spirit is spirit" (John iii:5-6). The Spirit of God gives life by His divine power to the believing sinner. He receives a spirit-nature, called the divine nature; the reception of this new nature is the new birth. The Holy Spirit imparts this new nature in His own unfathomable way, for the Lord said: "The wind bloweth where it listeth, and thou hearest the sound thereof, but canst not tell whence it cometh and whither it goeth: so is everyone that is born of the Spirit" (John iii:8).

This spirit nature separates the believer from the world. The Holy Spirit is the separating power in the believer, who by the indwelling Spirit becomes one spirit with the Lord (1 Corinthians vi:17). He that is born again is therefore separated unto the Lord; he belongs to Him.

We have quoted the words of the Lord Jesus, "I am from above . . . I am not of this world." The believing sinner, being born from above by the Spirit, separated from the world, separated unto God, is therefore also not of this world. This the Lord declared Himself, when in His high-priestly prayer He said, speaking of all who accept Him, "they are not of the world even as I am not of the world" (John xvii:14, 16). This is a deep and wonderful revelation. It leads us back to His death and resurrection. He gave His life and took it again that believers may receive this life in Him. The parable of the corn of wheat illustrates this (John xii:24). The corn of wheat dies, and through death reproduces itself.

The new nature, and the Holy Spirit dwelling in that nature, makes the development of spiritual life in fellowship with God possible. If the law of the Spirit is permitted to operate, the believer walks not in the flesh, but in the Spirit, and does not fulfill the lusts of the old nature, which is still in him, but no longer controls him (Romans viii:2-9). A righteous and separated life is made possible by the supernatural gift of the Spirit of God.

The Holy Spirit also produces fruit; a spiritual character is the result of His work. The high calling of the true Christian on earth is to walk even as Christ walked (Galatians v:22-24; 1 John ii:6).

This indwelling Spirit witnesses to the fact of sonship; by Him the believer calls God "Father," and has access into His presence (Romans viii:15, 16; Ephesians ii:18). He is in the believer the seal of ownership; for he is sealed by the Spirit until the day of complete redemption (Ephesians i:13; iv:30). He bestows gifts on the true Church. In the be-

ginning of Christianity He manifested Himself in supernatural gifts, such as the gifts of miracles, of healing, and of speaking in different tongues. After Christianity had been established, and the full revelation had been given through the doctrines of the Apostles, these supernatural gifts ceased, for this present age is the age of faith, and not of sight. The attempts to revive these sign gifts have been proved more than once to be spurious.[9]

Without giving a complete analysis of the work of this supernatural power, we mention the fact that the Spirit of God leads the believers into all the Truth; He guides to service; He gives power in service for God; He teaches how to pray effectually; He keeps and sustains in trials and sorrows.

The Christian Church in our times seems to have forgotten the noble and wonderful story of the martyrs. What a story it is! No Church historian has ever been able to tabulate the thousands upon thousands who were cruelly tortured and put to death under pagan Rome; nor do we know the exact number of the martyrs who suffered under Papal Rome. Their names and deeds are all recorded in heaven. Stephen was the first martyr. As the stones fell upon him to crush out his life, he said, "Lord Jesus, receive my spirit . . . Lord, lay not this sin to their charge" (Acts viii:59-60). The Lord Jesus had prayed on the cross the same prayer; He commended His spirit into the hands of the Father. It was the supernatural power of the Holy

[9]Church history reveals the fact that at different times the Pentecostal gift of speaking in foreign tongues was revived, and also the gift of miracles.. But all these different movements, as we have shown in our book on "The Healing Question," were found to be spurious. It is the same with the present day Pentecostalism and the claims of faith healers.

Spirit which enabled Stephen to utter the same words. In reading the great work of Fox, "Acts and Monuments," giving the story of the martyrs, we were impressed with the fact that the great majority of martyred men and women, as the flames burned their bodies, breathed out their lives in the same manner as Stephen. Instead of groanings and curses, they sang praises; they prayed for their enemies; they died in the assurance of eternal life and glory. No psychological laws can explain all this. Supernatural power was upon them, and in fulfilment of the assuring words of their Lord, "Be of good cheer, I have overcome the world," (John xvi:33) they overcame. The Spirit of God gave them the victory.

How many of the present-day Modernists, should they be called upon to seal their denials with the martyr's death, would march triumphantly to the stake and commend their spirits into the hands of the Lord? How many of them denying a supernatural revelation, the supernatural Christ and His work, His supernatural survival and His presence in glory (as Stephen beheld Him), would sing songs of praise and songs of glory as they passed out of life into eternity? The Spirit of God on earth, indwelling the believer and the true Church, is the demonstrating supernatural power of Christianity.

VII. A Future Supernatural Manifestation. We come now to the final supernatural fact of Christianity. Christianity has the promise of a future crowning manifestation. What is it? The Lord Jesus Christ spoke frequently to His disciples that they would see Him no more; He would return to the Father and go back to heaven whence He came. But this is not all. He promised that *He would*

return. He assured them that the world, which beheld Him on a cross between two thieves, would some day see Him again, not in humiliation but in glorious exaltation. This promise holds a prominent place in His teachings. He spoke of coming in the clouds of heaven in great power and glory (Matthew xxiv:29-31).

In comforting His sorrowing disciples He said, "I will come again and receive you unto Myself, that where I am ye may be also (John xiv:3). He mentioned in parables such a return. When His disciples and others thought that the kingdom, promised to Israel, should appear immediately, He spoke a parable in which He compared Himself to a nobleman who "went into a far country to receive a kingdom and to return" (Luke xix:12). He compared Himself to a bridegroom who is to receive the bride. But while he tarried the virgins slumbered and slept. Finally, the parable tells us, He will come (Matthew xxv:1-13).

He also described the signs of His coming. He spoke of the political, the moral, the religious and physical conditions prevailing during the present age, and the conditions He will find on earth when He returns (Matthew xxiv:1-24; Luke xviii:8).

He promised rewards to His faithful servants. When He receives His throne of glory, His disciples will also reign with Him (Matthew xix:28). When He sits upon the throne of His glory, He predicted, He will judge the nations (Matthew xxv:31). He frequently exhorted His disciples to live and to serve in anticipation of His return; their loins should be girded and their lights burning bright (Luke xii:35). Here is one of His most impressive commandments: "Take heed, watch and pray; for ye

know not when the time is. For the Son of Man is as a man taking a far journey, who left his house, and gave authority to his servants, and to every man his work, and commanded the porter to watch. Watch ye, therefore, for ye know not when the master of the house cometh, at even, or at midnight, or at the cockcrowing, or in the morning; lest coming suddenly, he find you sleeping. And what I say unto you, I say unto all, Watch" (Mark xiii:33-37).

Nor must we forget His testimony given in the presence of His accusers. The high priest asked Him, "Art Thou the Christ, the Son of the Blessed?" Then He answered, "I am, and ye shall see the Son of Man sitting on the right hand of power, and coming in the clouds of heaven" (Mark xiv:61-62). Dramatically the high priest rent his clothes and charged Him with blasphemy. Their bound victim had claimed Deity, the place of power, and had asserted His identity with the One whom Daniel beheld in his night vision, the King over all the earth (Daniel vii:13-14).

What startling statements these are! The writer has no sympathy whatever with the fanatical perversions of this doctrine, invented by unbalanced minds. In a life time of service for God he has combatted the error systems which have distorted and mutilated these plain and direct statements of Christ concerning His return. But we wish to say that no true theologian can afford to ignore the eschatology of the Lord Jesus Christ. And if he does, or if he belittles it, he will soon find himself in the fog of Modernism. But more remains to be said about the pledged return of Christ.

At His ascension, beings from another world an-

nounced His return. "This same Jesus, which is taken up from you into heaven, shall so come in like manner as ye have seen Him go into heaven" (Acts i:10-12). Equally significant it is that the doctrine of a second coming of Christ becomes in the Epistles one of the great central doctrines of Christianity. The greatest truths cluster around His return. All hope rests upon this future event. It is the very polar star of the Church, for the Church of Jesus Christ, according to the teaching of the New Testament, is not a permanent institution in the world. Her destiny is to be with the glorified Head in heaven. This destiny can be realized only with His return. Then the portals of the Father's house with its many mansions will swing open to receive the sons of glory.

The redemption of the body in a resurrection of incorruption is inseparably connected with this future coming of Christ. To those living in that day is promised a supernatural translation, in a moment, in the twinkling of an eye. There will be a reunion, and believers will find again their loved ones who died in Christ. The following New Testament passages verify all this: 1 Thessalonians iv:13-18; 1 Corinthians xv:51-58; Philippians iii:21; Colossians iii:4; 1 John iii:1-2.

Rewards for faithful service can be bestowed only when He comes again. Paul bears witness to this in writing his last epistle from the Roman prison. "I have fought a good fight, I have finished my course, I have kept the faith: henceforth is laid up for me a crown of righteousness, which the Lord, the righteous Judge, shall give me at that day: and not to me only, but unto all them that love His appearing" (2 Timothy iv:7-8). He taught by reve-

lation the bestowal of rewards, when believers at His coming appear before the award seat of Christ (1 Corinthians iii:11-13; iv:5).

In the Epistle to the Romans is penned another revelation which is connected with the return of Christ. All creation, groaning on account of man's sin, will be delivered from its groans (Romans viii: 19-22).

The last Book of the Bible makes known the great victory which is in store for the despised and rejected Christ, when He comes the second time. It is then that the prophecy in Genesis iii:15 will be fully accomplished through the complete defeat of the serpent. Evil is dethroned. A mighty shout is heard, "Alleluia! for the Lord God Omnipotent reigneth." . . . "The kingdoms of this world are become the kingdoms of our Lord, and of His Christ; and He shall reign for ever and ever" (Revelation xix:6; xi:15).

Throughout the New Testament this blessed hope is revealed in its practical bearing; it is the purifying, the separating power in the life and experience of the Christian (1 Thessalonians iv:18; 1 John iii:3).

All we have briefly written as to this future manifestation of Christ, promised by Himself and unfolded by the Spirit of God as one of the great doctrines of Christianity, is unknown in the different ancient and present day religious systems. True, some of them have faint echoes of a coming "golden age" and the final conquest of evil. But the New Testament revelation is gloriously unique, and is found nowhere else.

What about the founders and teachers of the world religions? Did any religious leader ever make

the positive claim that at some future time he would return? Did Buddha Gautama, before he died of indigestion, tell his admiring disciples, "You will see me again, coming in the clouds of heaven"? What about Zoroaster? We know very little of his life.[10] Did this religious teacher and reformer promise, "I will come again"? What about Mohammed? Did this sensual, false prophet tell his hordes that they should watch for his return? What about the modern men and women who assumed leadership, claiming some kind of a divine revelation or commission? Did Joseph Smith, the author of the Mormon fraud, promise a second coming? Or did Mrs. Mary Baker Eddy, with all her audacious claims, have the temerity to announce before her death that she would come back in a visible manner? There has never been a religious teacher or leader who made such a claim or who left a promise of this kind.

The One, and the only One, who has promised such a second coming, is the Lord Jesus Christ. Some liberalists oppose this great testimony of Christ by denying that Christ ever made such predictions, claiming that these predictions are interpolations. Others say that His words, and the teachings of the Apostles in the Epistles reflect the then current belief among the Jews, taken from certain apocalyptic writings. They charge the Apos-

[10]Zoroaster, also called Zarathustra, the shining One, was born in Bactria. Having fled to the desert to escape the spectacle of evil, he brought back with him his doctrine. which owing to the patronage of the King of Bactria quickly spread. He is said to have been married three times. It was from the third marriage, contracted in a higher sphere, that the deliverer was looked for to complete his work. The figure of Zoroaster was so early enveloped in the myth of his deification, that it is impossible to distinguish the basis of truth in his history. Some scholars doubt if he ever lived.

tle Paul with having formed his views from these sources. As if such a wonderful revelation as is recorded in 1 Thessalonians iv:13-18 could have been invented by the ingenuity of a man. If it were the product of the brain of the Apostle, then he practiced a fraud, for he claimed distinctly to have received it *by the Word of the Lord.* The common weapon of Modernism against the doctrine of a second, glorious and personal coming of Christ is sneer and ridicle. In doing this the liberalist verifies Scripture, for Peter predicted: "Knowing this first, that there shall come in the last days scoffers, walking after their own lusts, and saying, Where is the promise of His coming? for since the fathers fell asleep all things continue as they were from the beginning of creation."

What does the revelation of God predict as to the future of the earth and the race upon it? It predicts a future of glory, a time when nations will turn swords into plowshares and spears into pruning hooks (Isaiah ii:4); a time of blessing and glory, a time when the earth will be covered by the glory of the Lord as the waters cover the deep (Habakkuk ii:14). Even animal creation will be changed, and peace will reign on earth, while all polytheism, and every false worship will cease, and the one Lord of All will be adored (Zechariah xiv:9). But that glorious future is always connected in both testaments with the visible manifestation of the Lord. The great predicted blessings and glories are the results of His coming. The golden age will then come.

Greek and Roman mythology mention such an age. It is given as the earliest of the four ages, the ideal period when the earth, under Saturn's reign, produced fruits without cultivation, when

there was no warfare, and man lived in perfect happiness, before sin ever entered the world. It is a faint echo of the Edenic condition, before sin and death had come. Classical pagan writers such as Plautus, Lucretius, Catullus, Cicero, Sallust, Vergil, Livy, Ovid, Horace, Hesiod and others, all stated their firm belief in the return of the golden age. Some expressed the opinion that a divine person would descend from heaven, and that through his advent the golden age would dawn once more. Vergil, who lived in the century before Christ, wrote in his *Eclogae* the following lines:

> The last Age decreed by the Fates is come,
> And a new frame of all things doth begin;
> A holy progeny from heaven descends,
> Auspicious in his birth, which puts an end
> To the iron age, from which shall rise,
> The golden age most glorious to behold.

Where did these heathen poets get such a conception? About 280 B. C. Ptolemy II is said to have requested the Jews to send seventy rabbis to Alexandria for the translating of the Old Testament into Greek. It was done; the translation produced is known as the Septuagint. The Hebrew Scriptures were made available for the Greek-speaking world, and Vergil undoubtedly learned from reading the Hebrew Prophets that through One coming from above the golden age of righteousness and peace would come back to the world.

Similar conceptions are found in other religious systems. Here Zoroastrianism must be especially considered. After the death of this religious reformer Mithraism was revived. Mithra[11] was the sun-god. There was to be a final victory over

[11]The "Shamash" of the Chaldeans and the "Helios" of the Greeks.

Ahriman, the god of evil. Mithra became the impersonation of the delivering power, many mysteries being connected with this belief. Zoroaster himself, though he had been exalted to the dignity of a divine being, was looked upon as unable to win the final victory. Earth was awaiting a coming divine hero, who alone would be able to complete the work begun, driving Ahriman back into the eternal darkness, and inaugurating the "golden age," the era of endless and unalloyed bliss. There was to be a great day which would bring the consummation of all things.

Modernism, in its outspoken attempt to discredit and undermine the revelation of the Bible, tries to show that the eschatology of the Old and New Testament is mostly due to the influence of Zoroastrianism. The Jews, it is said, having come under Persian control through the conquest of King Cyrus, learned then to believe in an Ahriman, a personal devil, whom they called Satan. They also adopted the idea of a day of consummation from the Persian religion. The enemies of the Bible charge that the Biblical and Apocryphal descriptions of future events, as described in Daniel and in the Revelation, are in greater part borrowed from Zoroastrianism and Mithraism. They also explain the change of the Jewish Sabbath, the seventh day, to the first day of the week, by the customs of Mithraism, which had a sun-day. Paul, it is charged, introduced some of this Mithraist belief.

All this is mere supposition, a groundless and bold assumption. Even a superficial reading of the majestic prophecies in the Old Testament shows their superiority in every way, and compared with the Zoroastrian-Mithra beliefs, the latter appear more than ridiculous. There is in the Old Testament

such a harmony in the predictions of the future and consummating events, the great *Yom-Jehovah*—the day of the Lord, and the blessing and glory which follow that day for Israel, the nations, and all creation, which is totally unknown in the so-called "Apocryphal Literature." The puerile elements which are found in that class of literature are lacking entirely in the prophecies of the Bible. The question as to the date and authoriship of the Old Testament Books enters largely into this argument. It is claimed that "ripe and mature scholarship" has discovered that the greater part of these books were put together after the Exile. But the "ripe and mature scholarship" is not altogether in the possession of Modernists. There is just as much "ripe and mature scholarship," and even more, which refutes conclusively the suppositions of destructive criticism.

But it all comes back to the supernatural One, Christ Jesus. The prophetic teachings He gave are in greater part restatements of what the Prophets before Him had written. He confirmed the Old Testament eschatological teachings of a coming day of manifestation. He taught that the Jehovah who will then be manifested is *He Himself*. He assured His disciples that there will be a palingenesia, a regeneration, or re-creation, when He comes and occupies the throne as King of kings and Lord of lords (Matthew xix:28; Revelation xix:11-16). Of this regeneration Peter also testified, as "that which had been spoken by the mouth of all His holy prophets" (Acts iii:19-20).

According to the Modernist, the Lord Jesus must have accepted the legends of Zoroastrianism, and must have shared in the common, but erroneous,

beliefs of the Jews adopted after the Exile. For the Modernist this is quite easy to accept, for Christ was nothing but a man, and not the infallible Son of God, who knows all things and whose holy lips could only teach the truth. According to the Modernist all the teachings of Christ about a personal devil, and His actual temptation by that being, are the myths of Babylonia and Persia. His claim of a second coming must therefore be traced to the same sources.

But Christ was not a mere man, a religious teacher. As we have seen, He is from above: He is not of this world. He did not come to found a new religion. He is supernatural in His origin, in His life, in His teachings, and in His works. No other explanation of His Person is possible. With this belief, founded logically on facts, and more so, on divine revelation, extending over several thousand years, the theories and assumptions of Modernism go to pieces.

The Lord Jesus Christ promised a personal, a visible and glorious return. As we have seen, this future coming had a prominent part in His public ministry. We learned that some of the vital truths and doctrines of Christianity are linked with His second coming. On it depends the fulfilment of unfulfilled prophecy. The day must come when He shall be crowned as King, when as the Prince of Peace He will abolish war, when all false worship will cease, when every knee must bow and every tongue must confess Him as Lord (Philippians ii:10-11). *Is this coming to pass?*

Let us suppose that it is *not* coming to pass. Let us suppose that He will not return. Let us suppose that there is no such place as the Father's

house, to which He has gone and to which He promised to take His own. Let us suppose that all the other promises and predictions recorded in the Gospels remain unfulfilled. Let us suppose the Person of Jesus Christ will never again be seen.

What Would All This Mean? It would be the demonstration that Christianity has no supernatural foundation and no supernatural Christ. It would mean that the Lord Jesus Christ was not the eternal Son of God, for He made predictions which were not true, and if such is the case we would have to disown Him as the infallible teacher come from heaven. It would mean that His incarnation through the Virgin-birth is not true, but patterned after the myths and legends taught in pagan religions. It would mean that His miracles are inventions of clever men. It would mean the complete collapse of the scheme of redemption, that His sacrificial death cannot save, cannot help man back to God, cannot give peace. It would mean that the entire belief in a supernatural revelation recorded in the Old Testament must be forever abandoned, for it is demonstrated a failure. It would mean that we have no revelation which can be trusted. It would mean that the millions of human beings who lived and died believing this revelation, praying and hoping for the final fulfilment of what this revelation promises, were deceived. It would mean a church without a destiny, a world without a hope. It would mean that the race must keep on searching hopelessly for a solution of the unseen, and of human destiny, which can never be found. It would mean a night of increasing darkness and despair. It would mean that the victory belongs to the powers of evil. It would mean that the atheist who says in his

heart, "There is no God" is not a fool, but the wisest man in all creation. It would mean that the Modernist with his denial of the supernatural after all is right, and that the millions of the past and of the present who believed in the revelation of God, and in the Christ of God, were and are misguided dupes.

We dare not say in concluding this volume, "*supposing* what the Lord Jesus Christ predicted should come true," for we are sure that every word the Son of God spoke on earth, and every word which the Prophets wrote under divine inspiration, will ultimately find its glorious fulfilment. This conviction is shared by millions of true believers, who in spite of the modern drift still hold to an infallible revelation of God in the written Word and who believe in the supernatural Christ as the living Word.

And when it comes to pass, as it surely will, what will it mean? What will it mean when the long-expected second advent takes place? It will demonstrate the supernaturalism of Christianity. It will be the crowning evidence that the Book of books is the revelation of God. It will mean that the Jewish Prophets were not Jewish enthusiasts who copied pagan traditions and pagan inventions, but that "they spoke as they were moved by the Holy Spirit." It will mean that Peter's great confession, "Thou art the Christ, the Son of the living God" is true. It will mean that the Lord Jesus Christ is the Virgin-born Son of God, that He is "the Way, the Truth and the Life." It will mean that His death was not a martyr's death, but that He died for our sins. It will mean that He rose physically from among the dead. His second advent as the glorified Son of Man will be the evidence that He

was, ever since His ascension, the mediator between God and man, the priest and advocate of His people.

It will mean that the message of the Gospel is God's salvation. It will demonstrate that millions who believed on Him were saved. It will mean the glorious destiny of the Church. It will mean the resurrection of those who have fallen asleep, and a blessed reunion of all the redeemed. It will mean the victory of the Seed of the woman, the end of the age-long conflict, the dethronement of evil and the enthronement of righteousness. It will mean the answer to the prayer, "Thy kingdom come," in the establishment of His kingdom. It will mean the realization of universal peace and universal righteousness. It will mean that all the world will turn to God and worship the King of Righteousness and the King of Peace. It will mean the accomplishment of every vision; it will mean that which no pen can describe. Glory and blessing everywhere, for Israel, bowing then before Him whom their fathers rejected and delivered into the hands of the Gentiles; glory and blessing for the nations of the earth, whose false worship ends forever. The "golden age" has come. Groaning creation will groan no more, for He who bore the crown of thorns has removed the curse.

And it will mean something else. His return will bring the complete and final answer to every form of infidelity and Rationalism, Atheism, Agnosticism, Pantheism, and Evolutionism. It will spell the final and ignominious defeat of Modernism and every other movement and cult which denies the Christ of God and His redemption work.

And here we rest.

We wait with His true Church for the coming day of victory, which, perchance, may not be delayed much longer. With the Apostolic Church, with all the Saints of God throughout this age, we "wait for His Son from heaven." We wait for the coming, crowning vindication of supernatural Christianity.

> "*For the vision is yet for an appointed time, but at the end it shall speak, and not lie: though it tarry, wait for it; because it will surely come, it will not tarry.*" (Habakkuk ii:3.)

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